
M E M O I R S

A N D

O P I N I O N S

O F

M R. B L E N F I E L D.

V O L. II.



M E M O I R S

AND

O P I N I O N S

O F

M R. B L E N F I E L D.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

TALES OF SYMPATHY.

VOL. II.

An internal Motion, or Agitation of the Mind, when it passeth away without Desire, is denominated an Emotion: when Desire follows, the Motion, or Agitation, is denominated a Passion.

LORD KAIM'S ELEM. CRIT. V. I. 42.

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M E M O I R S

A N D

O P I N I O N S.

C H A P. I.

WHEN I closed the preceding volume, it was under the prepossession, which arose solely from the task I had undertaken, of recounting the little affairs of a young man, born and living in the circle of a few selected friends, whose cordiality was the support of his life. The task had at first appeared delightful, but in its progress it produced an opposite effect; for I soon discovered that it ex-

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posed

posed to my view so many of my days, and so large a space of my mind, left in a profound blank; some of them in which no action was performed, no sentiment conceived, or no pursuit worthy to be recorded. I had half a resolution to bid adieu to my project; I began to examine the case; I flattered myself that I had raised the expectation, or the interest of the reader; and I hoped, by this time, that we were so well acquainted, that we had conceived a kind of regard for one another; besides, I was grown older—it had become my duty to rouse from human weakness, lest it should render me too indolent for active virtue, and too relaxed for true rectitude.

I became my own censor; and deemed it necessary, in order to curry favour with the reader, to repose in his confidential breast some remaining traits of the instability of human judgment, the
transient

transient smiles of earthly pleasure, and the untameable ardour of hope—ever awake, ever active, but never satisfied! “Hope,” says our great Colossus of literature, “is a feather in the wing of Time, which gives rapidity to its motion; we mount with it, and are carried above despair.”

Natural, self-partiality, leads us to excuse every action of our lives:—some, that vanity makes us dwell upon; others, that interest justifies; and others, that conscience detects. Still, after all, no view becomes so unpleasant to the eye as a retrospective view: but the follies of youth and health, even its follies, are in themselves excuseable, where the inclination is not inherently vicious, or the project dictated by deep malignity.

Many have advanced, that the dispositions of men are to be traced in early

B 2

youth.

youth. The fallacy of this maxim is evident, when we draw aside the veil that divides us from infancy to manhood. All animals would be alike, if reason did not distinguish some from others: thus it is, that before reason takes effect to govern us, we are precisely on a level with the rest of the creation, except in figure, and a superior cunning. All our gratifications are, then, the allurements of appetite:—we are vain, ardent for superiority, thirsty for power; ambitious, proud, revengeful; preserve our friendships while they serve our turn, and break the chain at the refusal of some trifling bauble; and we gluttonize beyond the moment that the taste is relished, while the savory morsel remains unexhausted!

But reason dawns with puberty, and ripens with manhood!—then there are chances of a new vision opening upon us, and rationality invites us to discretion.

But,

But, all-penetrating as you are, my fair reader, you tell me that there are many in the prime of manhood, and in advanced age, who would still be ashamed to read their own portrait in these characters of unguarded youth.

Alas, I wish it was possible for me to agree with you. When men, under the habitude of years and experience, still follow the bent of their young and indulged desires, they brave all reproach by boasting of their fame, and acquire glory over the noisy bowl in the title of cherishers of the passions; they establish justifications for their indulgences; court the applause of the thoughtless, and poison the blushing innocence of an uncorrupted mind, wherever they find it, into a scoff at virtue and decency! An old flame that has been constantly kept alive by frequent supplies, burns hot

6 MEMOIRS AND OPINIONS

among the embers, till they expire together.

Reason makes a gradual progress, and fixes her station in the middle of life.

CHAF.

CHAP. II.

MY sister had frequently, in the winter season, select parties who detested card-playing. At these parties it was my good fortune always to be welcome. A few evenings after the Lamberts left London, I was summoned to one of these conversations; and though my mind was too much accustomed to dwell on subjects which gave me an interest, yet I found myself insensibly released from all further obligation on their account.

My sister's party consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Freeman, their son and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Mansell, all the Harleys, two sisters whom I had never before seen, and who I learnt were the daughters of

a Mr. Cleavland, in Grosvenor-square, then upon a visit to Mrs. Mansell.

The eldest Miss Cleavland was tall, full, and very well made; her air and step were those of the woman of fashion, unspoiled by pride; she seemed not to know what vanity was, though every body's eyes gave her very copious lessons on the subject: she had fair hair, a soft complexion, and a voice that seemed in every word to express the tenderness and elegance of her mind!——To such a creature, is it strange I should be fascinated? Her beauty gave her no airs of dignity to poison her affable temper; she was not forward to converse, nor withdrew from it prudishly; her accomplishments were more than her diffidence suffered her to acknowledge; and her judgment was riper than her years could account for.

I was

I was admiring the neatness of her dress, which I esteemed the truest elegance. Old Harley began immediately to talk about the attraction of dress, and the great increase of it in his time; that it was often the enemy to real merit, which was neglected for it.

“ Oh,” said Mrs. Freeman, “ merit, if it is sterling, will out-shine tinsel at any time.”

“ Mr. Harley,” said I, “ looks for the solid and substantial: sound principles are very great acquisitions; but I do not see how they are incompatible with those external ornaments which render the person agreeable in society.”

“ Indeed, Sir,” said Harley, “ you mistake me:—I do not look so much for the solids and substantials as you represent; they are useful qualities for us, but they are not agreeable in young ladies;

B 5 they

they serve only to render them grave, and ruin their vivacity."

"Indeed, Sir," said his daughter, "if these are your sentiments, we must call upon the gentlemen to fight our battle for us."

"Indeed," said my brother, "we may have a fair opportunity of shewing our knight-errantry." — "If you don't," said my sister, "you shall have your spurs hacked off."

"I do persist in my opinion," said Harley, "and the ladies need not take so much alarm. If I would deny them all the great qualifications attendant on firmness of resolution and fixed principles of acting, it is not to abridge, but to extend their power:—I will join in the band my daughter is calling upon for their protection. Female merit has very different qualifications: happiness is not connected

connected with those I have mentioned; for which reason they were given almost exclusively to us. We all freely confess we are unhappy without the women; and it is only because they are not incumbered with these great marks of human valour; in them they are softened into the kind affections, and the attractive delicacy of an amiable mind;—amiable, because not over resolute, which is only a fine word for inexorable.

“I think,” said Miss Cleavland, “women are not without their resolution. Do you think, Sir, that we never form positive resolutions?—We can often recollect instances of it.”

“Perhaps so,” said Harley; “but first recollect how often you have retracted them.”——“I don’t understand you, Sir,” said she.——“Madam,” said Harley, “I once knew a young lady, to whom a college companion of

mine was very much attached :—the friends of the lady promoted the intercourse, as warmly as those of the young man opposed it. She was possessed of beauty, accomplishments, and affability. She certainly loved him ; but her honour compelled her to forbid his visits, for she disdained an introduction into the name without the cordiality of the family. He pursued her in vain for some time :—accident, at length, brought them together ; their regard was mutual ; the resolution which had so long separated them, fell to the ground. The gentleman's relations intercepted their second intimacy : he was enraged ; and, in his disappointment, accused her of delay, which had alone prevented their union. The lady was justly offended, and left him to despair. My poor friend was inconsolable, and his mistress inexorable. His mother at the end of twelve months died : her pride had stood in the way of her son's happiness, to which his father

now

now gave a hearty consent. I waited upon her myself with a letter to this effect, which she refused to open. I told her its contents: she considered,—and smiled a contemptuous disbelief. I left her. On my return, I met with my friend full of expectation, which it was not in my power to satisfy. He was resolved to receive her refusal from herself, and instantly waited upon her. She was unable to resist an interview: she loved him; and I afterwards saw them witness this love at the altar.”

Every body united to thank Mr. Harley for his tale, and to confer the honourable title of amiable upon both parties.

At this moment I felt the first dawn of that unbiassed affection which the heart suggests before it begins to canvass and scrutinize the advantages of an attachment. I longed to be placed in the very scene

scene Harley had described, and to feel his friend's suspense and agony, for the charming Miss Cleavland. ——— "I believe," said my brother, "that Miss C. will allow your argument in the point of view you have stated it."

She was three years younger than myself; she seemed to possess the air and disposition to which I could become a devotee; she insured a general approbation; and I aspired to participate in the lustre she had it in her power to reflect upon me. I could not restrain my eyes from hers; I saw that she grew offended—I was alarmed—I became silent. My sister came across the room to rally my absence, which she discovered; and when she had taken my seat, and sent me to another, I felt myself deservedly punished.

I could perceive that neither the Freemans nor the Mansells relished Mr. Harley's

ley's tale, or his conversation, which they feared would continue to run on these topics ; and therefore the Freemans proposed to separate, and ordered their coach ; while Harley, who was unacquainted with the reason, concluded the subject, by remarking, that very often a denouement produces strife and enmity ; but if suffered to lie still unprobed, the chance of saying keen things is avoided ; and then, perhaps, some unforeseen event may occur to clear every difference in an amicable manner.

As soon as the Freemans were gone, and the circle was reinstated—"Don't you think, Mr. Harley," said my brother, "that the education of young men would be improved, if they were taught to value the society of women, and were brought into it earlier?"

"I doubt

"I doubt it," said Harley; "I fear they would not make a better use of it than they do now."

"On the contrary," said Mr. Mansell, "it would certainly effect a reformation: by an early respect for the female character, they would insensibly learn to revere its delicacy, and this before any other ideas could obtrude."—Miss Harley laughed.

"I am glad to be supported," said my brother, "because I propose to myself much satisfaction in seeing my principle on this subject verified. Our fame with the world is not more our primary object in life, than our fame with the women: our future hopes of happiness depend on it; and, in general, we do not want discernment in these cases. Principle and virtue are both very compatible with gaiety and vivacity: the beauty of these acquisitions is best seen
in

in the company of women, who possess them unallayed by vice, and unclouded by policy."

"Perhaps you go too far there," said Mr. Harley. "Our best statesmen have learnt lessons of policy from their women."

"Now and then," said Mansell, "we meet with exceptions; as, where a woman, by taciturnity, by prudery, or by an unfeeling *sécheté*, shuts out that pleasing communication of manners, for which we are so much indebted to every circle we go into:—unless we see the beam of good-nature play on the face of a pensive beauty, we do not attempt to break through her silence and reserve. Cheerfulness will always guide an amiable disposition into a certainty of commanding our affection; and if the most sensible women do not put on this pleasing dress, their great qualifications are lost."

"Is

“ Is it necessary then, Sir,” said Miss Harley, “ that our happiness should absolutely consist in putting you in possession of our qualifications; and if we do not, then, that we must be lost?—are we nothing to ourselves?”

“ I will appeal to every one here,” returned Mansell, “ whether we do not all allow, that every being in nature must, from the constitution of things, live for the mutual benefit of the whole, rather than itself? And, therefore, I am sure the ladies will never be backward in contributing to the general benevolence. It has been said by some great writer, that the use of the world is only an imitative art: we look to you for examples. Formerly our youth had one great resource at entering upon the world, which was the women. A father would put on the garb of severity to his children, in order to restrain their hasty and self-satisfied tempers; and at the same time introduced.

duced them to women capable of forming them. Every attraction, every vivacity, ought to adorn the avenues of virtue: she thereby becomes more captivating."

"Indeed, I believe we must all confess," said my sister, who had just before turned from Miss Cleavland, whom she had all this time held in close conversation, "we must all confess, that a mixed company is very advantageous and agreeable to both parties."

"Most certainly," answered my brother: "a man who has been modelled by the women will always be good company, always polite. It is said of Louis xiv. that he never passed a woman, though he were on horseback, without taking off his hat: and Francis the First carried these attentions further; for, if any accident, malicious or concerted, forced a smile from him, he entreated his

his friends to attribute its cause to some Neapolitan courtesan; and he punished, as a national crime, any insult, or boumot, or detraction against a woman: this principle preserved his reign from the horrors of depravity, wherein the race that followed him were enveloped. Because the city imitates the manners of the court, the provinces follow after the city; and thus we see the universal influence of example. Mankind will always associate and copy from one another; and so by looking into the private life of citizens, the manners of the country are best discovered: youth cannot have a better school."

Mrs. Harley looked at her watch; the rest of the company caught the alarm; the carriages were called; I had the happiness of Miss Cleavland's hand down stairs, and the weakness of my own heart taught me the power of hers.

C H A P. III.

How could I dwell on those sensations, which arose from the purest, most refined admiration of a woman, whom I considered as formed to secure my happiness or misery! When I recollect those moments of my first impression, and that in which she waved her hand towards me as the coach drove from the door, I exult in the warmest gratitude, and cast my hands and my heart upward to the throne of benign goodness!

But it was my fate, after a second interview, in which her character and conversation appeared still more amiable, to be deprived of renewing these feelings for some time, as Miss Cleavland left the
house

house of our friends in the following week, to accompany her family into Berkshire, where her father possessed an estate of about two thousand a year.

My brother laughed at my folly and presumption, when I was contriving plans for a visit. I certainly had no pretence for an introduction; and an untimely intrusion might have ruined my hopes for ever.

I passed some days in trying to find out whether all I felt was not a momentary ebullition of passion, which absence and mixed companies would soon divert into some other channel; but the days grew long and tedious, and the trial too irksome. I called upon Mrs. Mansell, in order to hear more of her friend.

“ Well, Sir,” said Mrs. Mansell, in the usual manner, “ all young men are
2 talked

talked into a passion. Well, Sir, have you lost your heart?"

I cannot be said to have lost it, answered I, if I can tell who is in the possession of it.

Mrs. Mansell discovered by her countenance that she should like the affair, and would therefore make no hesitation to talk about it.

She told me that she had known Miss Cleavland from infancy; that her temper was never deranged; that her mind was stored with real information; and her adherence to truth was extended strictly, even to the most trifling occasion; that on the subjects of religion and virtue, her sentiments were those of far riper years; and though she must be conscious of a very attractive *tout ensemble* of person, yet, that she believed every other woman possessed superior qualifications.

But

But this character, given when she was about nineteen, cannot be esteemed a just portrait of her as a woman: the many new introductions, improvements, examples, ideas, and sensations, of which young women are rendered sensible from nineteen to twenty-five, serve to alter their dispositions, their manners, and their sentiments: the chance they have for a permanent attachment, and their natural hope of it, scarcely begin to occupy their minds with any real, solid principles, until eighteen or nineteen: their fears of success, their emotions, and doubtful approbation; their difficulties in portioning out their little confidences, their necessary simulations, and often their sharp points of envy, combine to alter their character, during the space of six years of the most susceptible period of human life.

And though we may smile at these criterions, they certainly fit a woman for her

her engagements in the world; they acquaint her with the part she has to act, and set her above the childish inadvertencies, into which we daily see every woman continually surprised, who marries before she has thus passed the term of her noviciate.

Mrs. Mansell said, she perceived I was not a little interested; but she was not quite certain whether I ought to begin to encourage any serious ideas on the subject.

I said, that I suspected some other attachment——A lady was here announced, as a morning visitor, and therefore I withdrew.

When I called upon my brother, the character Mrs. Mansell had given of her friend was the only subject on which I could converse; and I lamented for once the difficulties which arose insensibly from the

delicacy of the female character, and prevented the possibility of ascertaining the true state of her mind.

“Some men,” said my brother, “call this delicacy—prudery! They denounce this detraction against every woman who does not come three parts of the way towards them. If a man feels the dawn of attachment, he almost expects the lady should draw forth his declaration, or make one herself: diffidence then is degraded into artifice; if she does not tell him she is sensible of his merit, he stigmatizes her with an unfeeling coldness: at length he grows too indolent for assiduity, and if he perceives any thing like attention in her, he starts from his surprise, and suspects her of coquetry.”

But, my dear Sir, said I, this does not belong to me.—“Nobody will allow that,” returned my brother; “but I warn you, lest you fall into this snare;

if you do, you will most assuredly lose your lady.

I should deserve so to do, said I. Am I guilty of an impatience that delicacy forbids?

“ Oh, not in the least,” said he, “ when you condemn that very delicacy which prevents your knowing, in a second interview, the whole bent of the lady’s mind !

“ I have known many young men,” continued he, “ who have suffered themselves to go on in this condemnation; and finding its restraint in their pursuit of familiar confidence, fly into the open arms of unprincipled debauchery; there they meet with ready and welcome reception: the little abilities they find it requisite to shew, are flattered; their spirits are flushed by constant attention, and they mistake glowing language and

unbridled sentiments for the sincerity of a passion, and the candid generosity of an open heart. But when they are at last held by the arm for the base price of their indulgence, then all these charms fade away, and sink into the low account of sensuality !”

My mind was crowded with reflections.—I thanked my good brother for his zeal, and resolved to avoid the snare.

The more I considered on this sensual part of human enjoyment, and the more I see some of my young friends in the road to partake of it, it is due to virtue—to the honour of humanity—that I should say, the chief of the enjoyment of all sensual pleasures rests in the imagination ; the passions love to be prepared : fruition has not the charms they conceive ;—corrupted by evil example, and daily exhibitions of immorality, their taste becomes

comes vitiated, their judgment is blunted, and they intail upon themselves and their posterity unmanly and enervating injuries, which the whole value of their constitutions cannot eradicate !

C H A P. IV.

MY situation rendered me full of constant reflection; I loved to indulge this frame of mind; and in order to give a more uninterrupted flow to my ideas, I left London for a few days.

I found my disposition to be warm and free, unsuspicious, and confidential. I had the satisfaction of kind friendships; but I was wandering about to find a more tender repertory for all my sensations.

For, in the unspeakable transports of a sincere attachment, we readily ascribe half as much merit to the relatives and friends, as we do to the object of our regard; we love them because they love the same object, and do not place themselves

themselves between us: to them, all in common, we open our private recesses of sentiment and affairs. In our friendships we are more cautious; we relate some transactions, and conceal others; and thus marshalling our confidence, we doubt of our safety,—reflecting always, that we never know how far a secret flies. Every man has some interest, some wish, some friend, a wife, daughters, sons, or duty, a zeal, or end to satisfy, which attack him on all sides, and extort from him the burden—too great for human nature to sustain!

In conversations among our intimacies, male or female, we often disclose, from youthful garulity, frankness, and vivacity, the momentary ideas which present argument, or trifling circumstances suggest, which our minds instantly reject, but which our hearers often preserve:—unfavourable impressions are thus conceived; they spring from sudden impulses,

pulses, or casual objects never repeated, much oftener than from any defect of the heart; but from these the busy world will judge us—in the very moment when they will condemn the wary caution that bridles every expression! This proneness to judge ill of one another proves how little gentleness of disposition there is among men; and the more we live in the world, the more we find occasion to confess, that subtlety, overbearing pride, and want of candour, make up the chief of the tempers we meet with in all our transactions.

Thus it is, that after a few early years of innocent mirth and chearful honesty, we are driven into reserve by force: at length we meet with a cold reception, which tells us that, during our absence, our manners, or an opinion, or an opposite interest, have all undergone a critical examination. We reflect as we see a cloud of prejudice rise up before us, and
our

our warm energies, or our sanguine professions, represent to us the vain, the inconsiderate, the fantastic, weak, and perhaps contemptible parts of some of our actions; for every man, in his gay and youthful years, does and says numberless foolish things. Perhaps he is passing sensible, and has had a tolerable education; he fancies his superiority; he is not a stranger to the languages—this renders him pedantic: if his opinion is consulted, he becomes arrogant: does he receive attentions, he grows vain; but if he is diffident, he is despised for want of some characteristic.

A man that is superficial, as indeed most men are, should visit seldom at the same house; he is then always new, and has some new affair on his tongue to which he can hope to secure attention; but when once he begins to imagine himself in love with any female in the family, then he begins to expose himself, and by

too frequent attendances his external gloss wears off, and the poorness of the foil forces itself on every eye.

It is from this cause, among numberless others, that young men are always laughed at during this career, because they deceive themselves; and men will always feel a right to laugh at those who are ardently engaged in the same pursuit they have completed.

In this apology for reserve, detesting it, as I think it my duty to profess, no spleen has dictated my opinions, yet I tremble to think the picture true; I feel its effect upon my own heart, and I blush at human nature—not such as it was formed, but such as the artifice, the policy, the caprice of the world have made it!

While I was musing in this manner, my slow and gradual steps brought me
at

at last into the village where I first introduced the Harley family to the reader. I had been so much engaged, that I was surpris'd to find myself there ; and before I reached my friend's house, to which I now determin'd to mend my way, his daughter and a young lady suddenly came upon me, from a green lane that crosses the village, and terminates in a wood that bounds Mr. Harley's grounds.

My apparent reverie was the first subject of salutation. I was accustomed, in all my conversations with Miss Harley, to spare no sentiment, however free, nor to stop their progress by restraining any reply that the moment dictated.

“ You seem dull,” said she. “ I have heard you say, that a person may always be chearful, though they cannot always be merry.”

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I am still of the same opinion, said I; and, in general, when people complain of their companions being dull, it is because they are dull themselves.

“I will allow,” answered she, “that to enjoy conversation, is to be in good humour ourselves; and, therefore, as I am perfectly so, at this present, pray, Sir, make ready to hold forth.”

That’s the way to make me silent.

“Then you are just like the children, who can never play when you bid them.”

Aye, my dear Madam, we are all children of a larger growth, said I.

“Still so grave, Sir?” said the young lady.

Truly to enjoy conversation, said I, is to avoid contemptible comparisons; to

finile upon those who look grave; and to talk kindly to the silent; this will invariably model the genius of a party, and save it from the impertinence of forced complaisance.

“Yes, Sir,” said Miss Harley, “but this must be when a man throws off the scornful visage of being thought sententious;—when he forgets not that it is his duty to be polite;—all this is very different from forced complaisance, which drives away all sincerity, and, like a poisonous vapour, turns every sentiment into spleen.”

You are very sharp upon me, madam.

“Are you then,” said she, “beginning to condescend a little?—Come, come, you have been harassed all day with the affairs of the world, and we must forgive a man’s temper, that is ruffled by the rubs of state. Where’s
your

your brother and sister?—How do the Mansells, are they in town still? But it is all one to you where they are:—let me bring your ideas home:”——
Home, Madam!——“Yes, Sir, home,” she repeated.—“How does the charming, the all-accomplished Miss Cleavland; and how many miles are there, and roods, and furlongs, that divide you between this place and the rude castle that contains her in Berkshire?”—

In Berkshire!——“Yes, Sir, in Berkshire, I know where the treasure lies.”

You are pleased to be very lively, Madam, said I.——“Yes, Sir, that is truly to enjoy conversation; and I know you can be chearful, but at present we must not expect you to be merry.”

Indeed, said I, this will not make me either merry or chearful.

“Come

“Come then,” returned she, “let us take another method.”

At this lucky moment Mrs. Harley overtook us.

“We have met with a beau,” said the young lady. “Yes truly,” said Miss Harley, and he is so much in the spleen, that I fear the young man is disappointed in love, and means to hang or drown himself.”

“He knows better,” said Mrs. Harley.—“What is old pogy gone?” said Miss Harley.

“Yes,” returned her mother; “such a mess of jargon we have had, that will last me for a month!”

Pray who, said I, have you christened so elegantly?—“Our vicar,” answered Miss Harley.—“I hope you will have

have more mercy upon me, said I;—nothing is so contemptible as a nick-name.

“ Oh,” said Mrs. Harley, “ he drinks and swears, and is so conceited, that no name is bad enough for him. When a man is silent about his own actions, then he is polite and generous : but this man thinks to gain your favour, by attacking your esteem by main force ; then he cracks the drum of your ear with some of his *undederivatur*s, as he calls them, of sounding long words, expecting to make us women gaze with wonder ; then he tells you of some feats of benevolence, which, as soon as you praise, he swears, for fear you should not believe him, that he was the author.—He has been in town lately, and went to a concert, and an exhibition—and he talks away about what he saw, so learnedly, about his *tints* and his *keepings*, and *movements*, and *adagios*, that there is no object in his eye to which he does not apply

apply these terms he has picked up. Foolish man! he little thinks that while he thus tries to display his whole stock of knowledge to us ignorant women, as he supposes us, we sit and quietly hear, and as silently despise."

I heard all this with so much satisfaction, that I begged her to proceed in her description; it suited my frame of mind; and I told her it was an excellent lesson, which I should never forget.

"But lessons," returned she, "are not very agreeable; and I have no ambition to read you a garden lecture, lest you edify so much from it, as to make it the last."

Thank you, said I.—"What vanity!" exclaimed Miss Harley.—If I had no vanity, said I, you would hate me; every word you address to me excites my vanity, because you think me worthy to be
be

be addressed : and I am the more vain, because I am unworthy of the honor.

She understood this only as a compliment ; I meant much more :—I knew that Miss Harley could have endured me, if I could have trusted her ; but she had an acidity of temper, that rendered me perfectly satisfied to preserve her as a companion.

We now arrived at a green gate, which led into the garden, where the scene was agreeably diversified with lawn and thicket, with parterre and shade.

I continued in the garden, when the ladies left me to go into the house.—As I rambled through the walks, my mind strayed back to its original theme : I traced my Harriet's countenance, when I first felt what now possessed all my thoughts ; when I fancied that hers were the only eyes which sparkled in the circle ;
when

when I deemed it an interruption when any other person spoke; when my ear dwelt on every word she uttered; when she conversed with me freely; when we agreed in opinion; when she directed part of her discourse to me alone; and then, when I was beyond myself! Heavens! what an interview, said I, to be the first!—Every difficulty on that account is done away;—I planned measures for an intercourse—and fixed all my confidence and all my views on Mrs. Mansell.

But I grew fatigued with my walk, and sat down on a bench, and in that moment, when the spirits became quiet, I began to consider of circumstances;—there's the rub! I examined myself;—I knew of no act by which my honor or my heart were bound: Miss Harley then cross'd my brain! I stamped on the ground for vexation;—but I considered whether the interruption was seasonable; I began to doubt whether she had not a claim

claim of some sort upon me, and grew enraged at my attentions to her:—Mr. Cleavland too, had five or six children, and had been extravagant:—I sunk almost exhausted on my seat. This examination gave me a lesson, which has already been suggested, that the ardors of youthful days proceed more from imagination than solid truth: vanity gives a zest to encouragement, and we think we love, when we have been only bewildered by an *ignis-fatuus*!

CHAP. V.

IT was time that I should adjourn to the house, and as I approached towards it, one of the servants met me to summon my attendance at the tea-table : my spirits were in no degree fit for the jocularity of a family unaccustomed to the vibrations of tenderness ; but I resolved to do my best.

As soon as I entered the room, I found it occupied by a large party, who very soon after they had swallowed their tea and coffee, divided into separate tables, and while they were settling their stakes, I gave Miss Harley a farewell squeeze of the hand, and withdrew to hold conversation with myself.

Were

Were it possible for all men once to know the varieties which their future days were to experience ; I can suppose the effect to be nothing less than instant insanity ! How highly then should we value the benignity of Providence, which veils them all in obscurity !—Nevertheless we are all ardent to explore ; we imagine we can penetrate farther than human eye hath power, act under the prejudice, and sink into the fatal consequences of chagrin or poverty.

Reader, if thou wouldst preserve a lasting peace of mind, which will guard thy nightly rest, and soothe thy gentle slumbers ; study the consciousness of thy own heart ; be not prone to too much penetration ; seek a virtuous attachment to one good woman, whose disposition suits thy own ; and never play the coquet ! Learn enough to admire the human heart, and thou wilt see its noble energies ; look not too far into it, that
you

you may remain a stranger to its turpitudes.

I coveted attachments and female conversation;—but since the blind phrensy of my twentieth year, I have found that to attach in right truth, many more things are essential, than I would then conceive or allow. A smile, and a frown, are at that age sufficient arbiters of what a stripling novice calls his *fate*.

If I have any ardours now, said I to myself, I can examine them; and when I do so, I find that the glow of passion is too potent not to be well understood; indeed I had not a moment's hesitation to believe myself very heartily impressed by it, but my fears of success in this infancy of my hopes, rendered me unsociable to myself.

I resolved to return home; and there I found myself as unsettled as before:
the

the circle that had always charmed me, lost its insinuating affection ; books, that once engaged my attention and stole away my time, were suffered to lie useless on the shelf ; amusements and pursuits which had occupied my leisure, became vain and frivolous ; in this indolent lassitude I had one morning strolled to the top of Cheapside, when I perceived a young gentleman and a lady walking together before me, and just as I came up with them, they separated, on her going into a shop ; at this moment a man rudely brushed past me, and approaching the young gentleman in a very familiar manner, was endeavouring to lead him away : he put himself upon his defence, and resisting the accost with a blow, instantly drew forth an explanation from his antagonist, by the production of a sheriff's warrant.

The young man did not appear to be more than twenty-one ; his countenance unfurrowed

unfurrowed by vices, was crimsoned with the shame of so severe a blot upon his character; and continuing his opposition, a crowd gathered round: he was alone, and I offered to be his friend.

The officer complained of his resistance, and resolved, against every entreaty, to conduct him to Newgate, where he could with more safety attend to any thing he had to say.

After we arrived at the prison, we were conducted through several dark passages and massy doors. Our ears were assailed with the continual clang of chains and buz of oaths, with every collected noise of profligate uproar and brutal mirth. We passed a great hall, where we saw a considerable number at dinner: the utmost festivity seemed to reign amongst them, though they were loaded with irons, their fare scanty, and their cloathing rags. In one corner of this

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hall we were left, till a door-keeper could be found, who was to introduce my young and trembling stranger to the debtors' side of the prison: he looked round him, and started with agony.

"I have a reputable family, Sir," said he, "and have, as yet, passed an irreproachable life."

"Has the young fellow paid his garnish?" said one of the dinner party.—
 "No,—damn'd if he has," answered another.—"Have at him then, Tom," said the former.

"Come, young man, down wi' your garnish: what signifies roaring and blubbering, like a woman;—we'll teach you better sport in a day or two "

The cook said it was customary to give them something, which he did, and we thereby

thereby got rid of their troublesome familiarity.

We were now conducted through a square yard, which with the windows that looked into it were crowded with faces, whereon the traces of villainy were marked so deeply, and in such various shapes, that I trembled to believe them human; and having arrived in a large room, where numbers were walking to and fro', others gaming, and others sleeping, we were left to our contemplations.

Here the young man fainted away: it was with the utmost difficulty that he was recovered to his senses; and perhaps if it had not been for the humanity of the keeper, he might have long remained in this unhappy condition. As soon as he came to himself, I asked him if he would send to any of his friends. He said his father lived in London, but he dared not risk

the agony he should cause him, by finding his son in such a place. As he recovered, he walked about the room for air. He said he had never seen or heard of the man, to whom he was said to be so largely indebted; that the officer had arrested him for five hundred pounds, and he had no right to ask a single individual to become his bail.

“ My character and reputation,” said he, “ are destroyed: it was but a short time ago that I engaged in business, and my friends saw their kindness marked with success. If I should be discharged this instant, report would fly abroad to crush me with suspicions; but what afflicts me most is, that I have the blessing of a hand and heart in positive engagement, that a few days were to fulfil, which this barbarous act will frustrate!”

I persuaded him to send for his father, who would be better able to assist him,
and,

and, by taking part in the affair, would be enabled to serve him more essentially with the lady. During the time that a messenger was dispatched to his father's house, I had frequent opportunities of discovering that he was possessed of a feeling heart, and, even in the midst of so severe an attack as the present, of a humane and forgiving temper; for we examined more critically the cause of his confinement, and plainly discovered, that by some slight difference in the spelling of his name, and great similarity of person to the real debtor, the officer had been led into a mistake.

At length we heard some hasty footsteps coming towards us——“He's this way, Sir,” said the cook, whom we had before seen in the kitchen: a well-looking man, of about sixty, followed her.——“Good God, my dear son!” exclaimed the old gentleman: they flew into each other's arms; they held each

other for some time; the father raised his eyes, which overflowed;—"What evil accident," said he, "could have brought you to this place?"—He looked round him with horror.

"I am so ashamed, Sir," said the young man, "at your finding me here, that I scarcely know how to avow that I am innocent; and then I have other fears!"—Here he covered his face, that was bathed in tears.—"I know your fears very well," replied he; "but let me hear the story of this affair, and your innocence will command all my little powers to dispel them."

I related to him all the circumstances, and that I believed the keeper was in consultation with the officer on the mistake which had been made.

The old man's tenderness dried up. He vowed the utmost rigour of the law
against

against all the parties concerned; and turning towards me,—“ Oh, Sir !” said he, “ this young man has been my only comfort : amongst all the vexations of evil fortune, and the calamities of disappointment in other parts of my family, this son has stood alone to support me : his integrity has ever been unimpeachable.”

Here we were interrupted by the entrance of the officer, who, after bowing and scratching his head, begged pardon for his blunder.

The father was raising his arm to chastise him for so flagrant a violation of all order : he was too much in a conflict of passion and parental affection to speak ; he took his son by the arm, and, as we approached the outward door of the prison, he threatened the officer with the utmost severity of punishment.—I gave

him a card of my address, and we separated.

I had not walked half the length of the street before the young gentleman came after me, and said that his father insisted on my accompanying them home, where my presence would be of essential service.

I was not long at a loss to conjecture the reason. I obeyed. When we joined the father, who had slackened his pace,——“ I have desired your company,” said he, “ to justify my son from the very unfortunate appearances with which this affair must strike a young lady, to whom he is engaged. I understand from my son, that they were walking together just before the officer spoke to him, and that he was not allowed to excuse himself to her, but was hurried away to prison while she was occupied in a shop, and where she must have been
eye

eye witness to his disgrace." I assured him that nothing would give me greater pleasure. We learnt at the shop, as we passed by, that the lady had ordered a coach, and drove away, soon after the crowd was dispersed.

As soon as we arrived at the gentleman's house, the young man asked for her, with a voice of anxiety and fear, that need not be described to the reader's feeling heart. The same lady, whose person I remembered, hearing the sound of our arrival, flew down stairs, with a rapidity that nothing but nature and unaffected sincerity could dictate:—"My dear William!" exclaimed she—and, in a burst of tears, tremulously enquired if he was safe? William pressed her to his heart!—"My dearest angel!" cried he, unable to speak—"Tell me," said she, more urgently, "what is the affair?—Are you safe?—Is any thing to be done?—What can I do?—Who is

this stranger?"—pointing to me, with a look of doubt and terror, that plainly indicated what she suspected me to be.—
 "You must not go," said she, "William: you shall not leave me!" She hung upon him, and wept.

The father, as soon as he had wiped away the tears that had flowed fast down his face, and having led us, with his wife and two daughters, who had by this time got round us, into a room; and having first assured them that his son was safe, and had explained in what capacity I had become interested in the affair, I was desired to relate the unlucky circumstances which had thus interrupted the happiness of the morning.

The old gentleman said, that he thought it incumbent on his son, as he had the good fortune to meet with one who had, unsolicited, taken a very friendly part in the affair, to entreat the
 favor

favor of his accompanying him home, in order to satisfy his niece of his son's innocence.

“ Oh, who could suspect him?” said the young lady: “ after twelve years intimate acquaintance, how could I want a justification!”—“ You are too generous,” said he. “ May I live to deserve your goodness!” He pressed her hand to his lips. The old man could sustain the scene no longer, but left the room; and though I longed to indulge my heart with a few more sensations which that scene produced, yet I knew that my presence would now become intrusive: I followed him—he held me by the hand for some moments, but he could not utter a word,——his heart overflowed——I left him to the glory of his feelings!

Such scenes awaken our recollection; and rouse our better part of man; the philosophy of the schools is nothing to them.

them. The young man seemed to have a high sense of honour, which springs from innate integrity: he seemed to be possessed of abilities, and *much heart*, if I may describe him by such an expression; but he had long partaken of the smooth current of a domestic family, unruffled by disappointments or cross accidents, with an easy affluence, just enough to save them from necessity on the one hand, and from too many friends on the other: his sensibility had grown up with his growth, and strengthened with his strength. Neither he nor his mistress had learnt that it was possible, in the wide circle of the world, to find others equally amiable; and they acknowledged that they mutually loved, because they had imagined it impossible to do otherwise.

Conceive then, a young couple, suddenly stopped in this even course, just when their union was at hand:—their imagination painted the most unfavourable

able constructions, and while the one was distracted with the thought that his hopes were blasted, the other fondly suspected that she had lost him for ever.

It is delightful to see how much the happiness of one individual in a social family is essential to complete that of the whole ! And it is lovely to see two hearts interwoven with each other, cast off that false delicacy which would unpardonably restrain them from expressing the beautiful energies of nature !

I had an opportunity, in a short time after, of learning from an intimate friend, that young Mr. Anderton, (for that was the name of the family) about four years before, had been very nearly caught in the filken cords of love, by a lady whose personal attractions, not unaccompanied with feminine artifice, had won and ensnared the gentle part of his disposition ; when bending to every impression

impression in the unguarded susceptibilities of early youth, he fancied that he loved, and saw not that every friend around him smiled at him for a dupe.

Sophia was then too young, and his friends very judiciously concealed their wish that she should be united to them by a closer affinity.—In the mean time, Sophia lost both father and mother, and had taken up her abode in her uncle's family :—her cousin was a man who it was not likely should remain insensible to Sophia's merit ; and as he grew on to the years of manhood, he reflected with concern at the petulance with which he had once treated his dearest friends, for thwarting his first attachment ; and began to confess, that too early passion is a compound of extreme weakness, vanity, and ignorance of the real dispositions of the human heart.

His

His father had often reasoned with him on this point, and had asked him what sort of life he expected to lead with his enamorado, when the dream was gone by, and the plain character, and the still plainer world, broke upon him from behind the cloud of folly and vanity, which his fantastic imagination had raised?—Young Anderton had at that period no ears for such language;—he was angry with his father when he told him, that he did not know how to love; when he thought himself in the midst of its career:—he now frankly owned that some few years of information, not to say experience in the world, are necessary to the forming a solid, lasting, and virtuous attachment.

The world are in general too fond of making early engagements, and of driving young people into them; in this they may perhaps raise their passions,
but

but do not consult their happiness.—How often is a girl, almost in leading-strings, taught to hold herself up, to look becoming, and flattered with lessons, how to make conquests, even at a dancing-master's ball!—How often do chattering neighbours, by affected smiles and simpers, raise the credulity of youth, by trying to discover a look of preference, by reminding them of the happiness their eyes betrayed in some familiar walk, or dance, or even in common conversation: if they fall into this snare, they live to find out that they married, before they knew what it was to have a choice.

But we grow wiser every day ;—every new face is a lesson ; every conversation, every object, shews us something we did not know before ; and thus we have opportunities, by a little delay, of summing up the account, and of examining

ing our mutual dispositions, a subject full of knotty and arduous enquiry, and we set out upon our travels through life, with a tolerable ability to discern the difference between running on a precipice, and keeping the high road.

C H A P. VI.

THE story of a man's life is as various and defultory as the winds ; as he advances in years, he gains new ideas ; his constitution undergoes a change : he new models his system, from the large lexicon of experience ; and in the fluctuation of seasons, becomes almost a new being.

But in the formation of us, susceptibility is absolutely necessary ; I mean that which gives us a strong desire to form attachments : to attain a just respect for the women, it is necessary to know them early : good fruits are to be gathered from their vivacity and tenderness, and they mature and meliorate the heart : the aukwardness of a young man, before
he

he begins to be modelled, is by their intercourse corrected, and the vulgarity of a tavern life prevented. Although every woman loves to be the first to captivate a susceptible youth, and though I have pleaded so warmly against the too early consummation of too early attachments, yet it must be confessed that this is by far the best school, to polish and render a young man amiable.

There is a natural propense penetration in all young women, on subjects of this nature ; if a new character presents himself, his figure first, then his address, his conversation, and even the characteristic passions that render him interesting, are all instantly probed and examined with a critical exactness :—a single attitude, marks him for a man of fashion ;—an expression, distinguishes him to be a lover ;—a glance from his eye, discovers his sensibility, or his folly !

Under

Under this examination, every young man must pass before the severe tribunal of female vivacity;—a tribunal, from whence there lies no appeal!

Indeed, it is not so with us;—we really take every woman by one favourable impression:—if we ever stop to judge about them, we pay a half-careful regard to their complexion,—more to their countenance,—a great deal to their dress,—and beyond all to their figure:—if all these unite in an agreeable *tout ensemble*, we are pleased, grow attentive; and if politely received—rush into assiduity; admire; and if once heard, irrecoverably love!

Oh human nature! What strange fancies of fortune lead our weak hearts, and shackle our imaginations!—But all thanks to thee for these charmingly delusive prejudices!—We live in a world of prejudices!—We attach, unite, and
live,

live, and love, by prejudice!—And were it not so, we should be overwhelmed by the toils of labour, the cares of domestic life, and the unceasing vigilance of anxiety!—But these are all meliorated into the common mass of human events, by the kind commerce of conjugal affection, and the ebullitions of parental love!

I am led into these reflections by a visit which, during the void my mind underwent at this period, I paid to Mrs. Darmer; I found one of the Miss Barclays with her, writing at a table near the window.

Mrs. Darmer was an enthusiast; very strong in her likes and dislikes; and remembering the manner in which she had left my brother's house, I had the curiosity to see how I should be received.

The moment I made my appearance, she held up both her fat arms, and exclaimed

claimed loud enough to make the house ring, "Lord God! What is it you? Or is it your ghost?" To such an accost, a reply is needless—she made too much noise herself to hear me.—I took a chair.

"Well, Sir, and pray how comes it we have not seen you so long?—Some lady, I suppose, and a church, or a trip to Scotland, is in the wind."

I looked at Miss Barclay, and made her a bow from my chair;—"Ah," said Mrs. Darmer, "there's a love affair there too;—I don't know what's come to all the young folks, not I,—I am afraid it will prove an idle affair after all."

I hope not, madam,—Miss Barclay has too much penetration, said I——.

"Penetration! Ha! ha! Young women in her sphere of life must not stand upon much penetration neither!"——
Surely,

Surely, said I, there is a right of choice every where.—“Choice!—ha! choice!—Yes, a fine thing indeed, to pick and choose; when its very well if any man will choose them!”

I don't doubt, whenever my cousin marries, the choice will be mutual, said I.

“Yes, perhaps it may; but I'd have her when she has got a good offer, marry first, and choose, as you call it, afterwards.”

Is the young lady given away then? said I.

“Pooh,” said Mrs. Darmer, “why you are as much a boy as ever you was!—The short and the long of the matter is this,”——“Nay, pray now, ma'am,” said Miss Barclay, simpering and trying to look modest.

“ My dear, there’s no harm in telling your cousin : if you don’t like to hear me talk about it, you may go up stairs.” —Miss Barclay thought she must go,—and when Mrs. D. and myself were alone, she drew her chair to me, and hoping that nobody would come to interrupt us, said she would tell me the whole story.

“ Your cousin,” said she, “ has not had quite so much luck in her school as might have been hoped for ; but that’s nothing to the purpose ;—there is a child there of the name of Barns ; the family live in the neighbourhood, and being overfond of this child you see, very often sent the young man to see it ; now we think that he has taken a liking to Sally ;—and I have got a friend not far off to find out what the connections are ; and I’m told that the father has some place in the city, and can give all his children something handsome ;—now if so, this
may

may be a good thing,—and this young man is the eldest son of six; so that if he should marry first, he may have a chance of faring a little matter better than the rest.”

Pray, said I, how old is the young man?

“ Why he’s turned of nineteen; and that’s all the better you know; because if he marries soon it will keep him out of harm’s way, you know, eh!”—pinching me significantly upon the arm.

And how do you know, said I, that he likes her?

“ How he likes her!—Oh, I’ll easily satisfy you on that score,” returned she:—“ It is not above three months since he first came there;—he was then as aukward a booby as ever trod shoc-leather;—made such a strange bow,—

and blushed when he was spoke to,—and stood with his knees knocking together, and not knowing what to do with his hands ;—that the girls all laughed at him :—but Sally thought as they had got his sister, they ought to be civil to him, and so they made him some tea, and talked to him, and once or twice set him to dancing, when the dancing-master came : till at length the young man grew so intimate, that he often made an errand to his little sister twice in a day ;—oh, then there's another thing ; he has a sort of a turn for poetry, and Sally having found it out, now and then calls upon him to read some of his writing ;—and he put the Country Mouse and City Mouse, the Fox and the Lion, and some other thing into verses ; and very often corrects something spelt wrong in the children's samplers : and now, I assure you, he is so much improved, that his own mother said, at the last public ball the children had, that she believed they

they had educated Tom as much as the little girl."

But what proof have you, said I, of any attachment?

"Oh! why," said Mrs. Darmer, "because he comes there so often, and *will* sit by Sally,—and takes her by the hand, and sits with her hand in his, and all that."

Does his father know any thing about it? said I.

"Why it's time now," said Mrs. D: "that he should;—and so I told Sally that they should come to some explanation,—and if the match went on, I'd give her enough to buy her cloaths with."

Have you seen the young man? said I.

“ Yes, I was there yesterday evening,—and I saw that it was plain he liked her,—and when I said so to him, he answered with very visible feeling, that he could not say but that he did ; and so I brought Sally away, and I have now been dictating to her a letter to his father, as coming from me.”

Well, madam, said I, an affair of this kind cannot be in better hands : I am afraid the young man’s father will see through it.

“ See through what ?” she exclaimed quickly.—“ Am I doing any thing wrong ? Here’s a young man in love with a girl, and the girl wants a husband ; in the name of God is it not charity to bring them together ?”

Here my fair cousin entered, and gave Mrs. Darmer the letter, which she seemed at first to be inclined I should see ; but
fearing

fearing any criticism or observation, hastily signed it, and returned it; and I saw it soon after dispatched by a servant from the door.

God speed the plough, said I.

“ Ah, I can see a little that you don’t like it now,” said Mrs. Darmer :—“ I don’t know what you would be at ;—I have known the time when you would have helped on such a matter as this ; but young men have so much hypocrisy about them in their conduct to women, that I never rightly understand them, and I doubt whether any of them are to be trusted ; not even a husband.”

That’s a doctrine my cousin may suffer by, said I.

“ Not at all ; it’s right she should be told what she’s to expect.”

But, said I, she is now beginning her confidence, and that with a young man—

“ Not a bit less able to keep it than yourself,” said she.

It may be so, said I, but if all young men are hypocrites to the women, how comes it you did not advise my cousin not to listen to their hypocrisy?

“ Because he is too young to have any,” said she.

Then, said I, you mean that experience and hypocrisy are the same thing.

“ Experience in the world,” said Mrs. Darmer, “ is a fine word ; but it’s nothing else than flattery—and that you all study to deceive by, as soon as you grow a little older.”

Perhaps

Perhaps it may be so, said I, and my fair cousin here is just about my age, and may therefore be supposed to understand it as well, at least——.

“What d’ye mean? D’ye think she has been artful; and that the young man don’t love?”——

He may fancy that he does,—and if he marries and continues in the fancy, it will be all very well——.

“You’re exceedingly uncivil, Sir,” said she——.

Pardon me, returned I,—argument often introduces implications, that were never meant to be conveyed.

“Oh how I hate young men,” said she; “they are so vain of their own knowledge.—I remember them very different; humble and unassuming; and
E 4 always

always ready to join in your opinion ;— but now they are the first beings of the earth ; and lose themselves in their own vanity :—such an age for young men as never was known.”

I thanked her for her good opinion. —Miss Barclay had resolved to be silent till I was gone.—Mrs. Darmer had a volubility that would have out-vied Mr. Dunning himself ;—she had a strong, uncultivated imagination :—many sentiments on every subject ; never spared a freedom of expression, nor repetitions which she thought could enforce her argument : she was hasty in reply ; and as sanguine in every scheme.

She said she held it as an invariable maxim, that no men were ever in love after twenty ; they then became men of the world, and despised it. It was a foolish phrase that young ladies were fond of, because they looked forward to matrimony,

trimony, and generally hoped to marry the man of their heart; but the difficulty was to find him, and when found, how to secure his fidelity."

Look among our friends, said I, and you will find that your opinions must yield to contrary instances. Social life—

"Social life!" exclaimed she; "dear Sir, you are yet to learn, that we know very little of our own families, much less of our friends: what do you know of people by a tea visit, or a card party?—Social life, indeed, there is none.—Besides, are not ninety-nine out of an hundred matches made, because, by some way or other, the parties are to be bettered in their fortunes? If it was not so, they had better remain single."

Do you think then, said I, that love never subsists between a man and his wife?

E 5

"No,

“No, Sir, it’s duty; which you men expect from us,—and duty never was the mother of love, since the world began.”

It was time for me to withdraw:—Miss Barclay did not seem to covet my company longer, by the pleasure which returned upon her grave countenance, as I rose to depart;—and wishing a favourable issue to the affair, I was by no means unhappy to be released from a conversation so replete with the low and unwarrantable contempt with which Mrs. Darmer had accustomed herself to treat every subject of either honor or regard.

C H A P. VII.

THE only pleasure which I was now capable of enjoying, was that of communicating my admiration of Miss Cleavland to my brother and sister; they could enter into my feelings, and give me credit for the sincerity of my partiality; while, at the same time, they cautioned me at too hastily forming my mind into an attachment that might not exist in my heart.

While I was conversing and trying to extend this pleasing subject, Mrs. Mansell was announced;—to my astonishment, and not a little to my confusion, Miss Cleavland herself accompanied her friend. Mrs. Mansell introduced her with her

usual affability, as an old acquaintance, and the conversation became general; my impressions, which I could not surmount, kept me silent: I felt my admiration encrease, but I knew that I must conceal my sensations, to avoid the danger of a too early declaration: the evening was divided between philosophy, letters, and religion, in all which Miss Cleveland did honor to her sex.

It was at this very period, and from the lips of this lady, that I first learnt the incumbent duty of every one to settle, at a competent age, the leading principles of his mind;—here I learnt the excellence of self-examination, and the beauty of preserving a virtuous resolution.

I was astonished at what I heard; but my astonishment produced despair;—so much excellence, said I, can never be reserved for me—I must yield to disappointment!

No communication is so insinuating as an examination of our opinions with a party whom we love :—sentiments flowing from genuine, uncorrupted simplicity ; an energy to support them ; a fertility of argument, and a ready reply, are all persuasive teachers of the *belle passion*.

We united in disapproving the rigidity of those who judge ill of every other maxim than their own. “ It is strange to observe,” said Miss Cleavland, “ how much the vain prejudice of self-estimation veils our candour in the judgment of objects, which differ only in the light they are viewed in !”

“ True,” said my sister ; “ and one should think that sincerity of judgment will always support its own intrinsic value.”

“ But the difficulty,” said my brother, “ is to find out what is sincere.” I could
prove

prove what is so, thought I, if I dared. "But there are strange causes in the world," added he, "that seem to justify all our diversities of opinion, and all our partialities."

"I apprehend," said Miss Cleavland, "that one great cause of our diversities of opinion, is our ignorance; and that our warm defence of one we adopt, arises from our presumption in attempting to fathom what was never meant to be disclosed; but we are suffered to know enough to lead our shallow judgments into right action."

Every body were charmed as much as myself. Mrs. Mansell looked at her watch: they were dressed for an assembly; I attended them to their coach.

I need not comment on, or declare the satisfaction I felt at discovering new traits so pleasing in the woman who I
might

might freely say had won upon my heart. I need not suggest to the intelligent reader, that Miss Cleavland and her perfections were the only subjects that occupied the rest of the evening. My brother always took a warm interest in my affairs, and my sister delighted to hear me express the energy I felt in my attachments. But the courteous reader wants relaxation: if he has travelled with me thus far, his patience heaps upon me many obligations. As to the picture I have hitherto given of myself, I trust it to the reader's candour; if he is a connoisseur, its failings will appear first: in what light he will condescend to view me, I am at a loss to judge;—if he has found me vain, fond of levity, or irascible, I appeal, that these are not the characteristic features of servility, ingratitude, or ingenerosity.

Perhaps the greatest difficulty in life is, to guard against pride and littleness:
men

men are often thrown into scenes, into conversations, and circumstances, which put their conduct to the proof; some stratagem becomes necessary to clear their escape; some falsehood to procure an end; some violation to be rich. To be superior to vices, to follies, and mean artifices—to be too warm to countenance acts of oppression, inhumanity, or dishonor—is the only becoming pride of human nature, or rather, the just emulation to which all men should aspire.

But how much easier is it to prescribe a rule than to follow it!

Among my associates I have found sincere, not false friends; I have learnt that mental and personal endowments are not the only securities for domestic happiness; but that temper, confidence, and fidelity, must all unite in the concord of conjugal happiness. If I have found these, let me anticipate

anticipate the hope of one day clasping them as my own : let me now arrive, by fond anticipation, at that hour, when life alone begins to have its value !

C H A P. VIII.

WHILE I reflected on my prospect of happiness with Miss Cleavland, I felt that the Harley's kept fast hold of me. I strove to shake off, though I could not recollect the least grounds of obligation: my attentions had been those only of politeness; and I gratified myself with recalling to my remembrance several instances of insensibility to Miss Harley's notice of me; but, at length, a consciousness of something I could not describe, seemed to establish a sort of claim, which became irksome; and though, in reality, there was none, yet, by following up the suggestion, my fears created that from which all the world would have absolved me.

I had

I had, nevertheless, strength of judgment sufficient to render me more cautious in my attentions; and, as I found my growing partiality for Miss Cleavland fast approaching to an irresistible attachment, I determined not to check its progress, but to seek new opportunities for intercourse, and new sources of assiduity, that I might the sooner attain a reasonable plea for explaining the situation of my mind.

Mrs. Mansell's door was always open to me; and she favoured my views, by frequent invitations of her friend.

Miss Cleavland's figure and manner, and accomplishments, as they appeared the last time we met at my brother's, had ever since constantly filled my imagination; I recollected, and dwelt with a weak rapture on every thing she had said; gathered up with tender care every opinion she had scattered; examined
them,

them, and ascribed a value not only to them, but to the very language with which they were uttered ; I could think on no other subject, and talk of no other theme—all was Miss Cleavland. My brother laughed at me. I made no delay to force another interview, by an uninvited call on the Mansells :—the whole party were gone to the opera.

I walked musingly into the park, contriving some excuse for the next day, as I was fearful that she should leave London before I might have the satisfaction of seeing her again. I failed in every plan ; I grew out of temper with myself, and therefore, for the present, I resolved to dismiss the subject.

It was bright moonlight, and the evening still and serene : I had reached the gate that turns into the palace, when I was met by a pair of sparkling eyes, that
dispersed

disperfed all my reflection.—“ Good night, Mr. Philofopher !” faid ſhe.

Vive la joie, faid I.—You have robbed heaven of two of its brighteft planets.

“ Perhaps you may be miſtaken, Sir.”

Thoſe penetrating eyes, faid I, muſt ſpring from an animated mind.

“ There are ſome men,” returned ſhe, “ who always have a ſcore of old compliments, which they deal out to every woman they meet. I thought you had not been one of thoſe. I could find in my heart to leave you this moment, were it not for ſome advice I can give you on the ſubject.”

I ſaid, I was all impatience.

“ Nay,

“Nay, Sir, if you talk such nonsense, I am gone. None of you,” continued she, “seem to consider that *we* anticipate all the flattery which you make a practice of uttering on every occasion; by practice its charm is lost; we don’t hear it; our frequent returns of passion and emotion, and the only kind of books we read, and the variety of characters we converse with, render us very indifferent to compliment, and make us far better judges of men, than they conceive, or than they are of themselves.

I was amazed.—She proceeded:

“Consider, Sir, we see them in their most unguarded moments, when they are hurried into ardours they cannot strive to suppress; we then mark the difference between the gentleman and the mere man: they think they must address in fine speeches, but they only render themselves thereby contemptible. Animation, and brilliancy, and all this jargon, may
found

found well enough in the ear of an innocent girl, who, like a blind person restored to sight, is caught by all the gaudy colours she beholds."

Charming! charming!—exclaimed I.

"Nay, Sir," returned she, "if you will persist——."

Indeed, Madam, said I, I must express my opinion also.—I never said an insincere thing to a woman in my life; and your open frankness would ill inspire flattery. I speak my own mind;—I hope you have not found me off my guard?

"Off your guard?—Ha! ha!—you sympathetic gentlemen should never be off your guard when you meet with a *fille de joie*."

But cautious men, Madam, are mostly hypocrites. If I were too cautious, I
 9 should

should say little, and place less confidence in my company.

“ Confidence, indeed!—I shall set you down for a novice !”

Thank you, said I; that is a very honorable character.

“ Then let me tell you,” resumed she quickly, “ that there is no confidence to be placed in a woman you meet with by accident, who expects to be paid for being looked at.”

If so, you must allow that nonsense is the only subject fit for us. If I must not hazard sympathy and confidence, I must have recourse to the weather—and that you are a fine woman, and that I long to have more of your company, all which you know already.

By

By this time we were arrived at Bennet-street.—“ But, after all,” said she, “ I am a very miserable creature:—you seem to be a gentleman—my lodgings are at hand—will you go in, and listen to my story?”

I hesitated—a thousand objections started in my mind: an appearance of infidelity might shake my credit for ever with those whom I wished to love:—I considered for a moment;—if this woman is unhappy, it is a duty to be her friend;—perhaps too I may recover her from her wretched condition of life:—if she is an impostor, I will try my own honor.

We entered a neat apartment, where having sat down, she hoped that I would be inclined to serve her.

I promised all my exertion; her person interested my admiration, but the

concern which hung upon her brow subdued every sense of passion.

She said, that exercise kept up her spirits, but that she never returned home but the silence of the house depressed her into the keenest reflections : “ *our* repartee and raillery, Sir, is soon worn out ; we talk with a momentary flash, that is exhausted at once ; if I judge rightly, you are no stranger to sympathy or compassion.”

Perhaps your story, which I am now more and more anxious to hear, may prove it : let me, however, promise that you shall not find me unworthy of your confidence.

“ Oh, Sir,” resumed she, “ when I have thus run riot upon myself, when I recur to my situation, and compare it to what it was, my heart bleeds.”

She

She leaned upon her hand—and at last raising her head, and looking towards me,—“ I know you will excuse my weakness!”—She wiped away her tears.—Her eye was caught by my shirt-pin.—“ That would please me,” said she, “ will you part with it?”—With any thing else rather, replied I.—“ But, in serious truth,” said she, “ I have set my mind upon it.”——So have I, said I.

“ It is some lady’s hair I suppose—and given you with a kiss?”—I could have smiled, but the recollection of that moment in which I received it from Miss Winter, and now the only relick which I had cherished of her memory, softened my heart, and made me forget all the world besides!

“ Can such a trifle as that be dear to you?”——Yes, very dear, said I.—“ Oh,” exclaimed she, clasping both her hands, “ what superior pleasures

have those innocent girls, who know the purity of an attachment, all the softness of fond affection, without its dangers!— I have known the satisfactions of those moments, and I live to repent the loss of them. My father was a farmer in Surry, not many miles from London; and having entertained a distant hope of marrying me to the son of an attorney, who was town-clerk of the next borough, I was put to a school, where every care was taken of my education, far beyond my father's station in life.

“ At the last general election, I was brought from school, to accompany my father and mother to this gentleman's house, to see the humours of the people: a young man, lively, and well dressed, took his stand near me at the window; and as I was then seventeen, was unfortunately grown near enough to the woman to attract his notice. While the young man, at whose house we were
 I assembled,

assembled, was engaged in the bustle of the day, this gentleman, who was his intimate friend, took upon him to do the honors of his house; and every body but myself then saw that his attentions to me were very particular: my father very often took occasion to draw him away to some other part of the room, but it served only to encrease his desire to return to me again. He very easily found out who we were, and on the following day came over to our farm, under the usual pretence of hoping that we got home safe.—Such attentions as I had never been yet accustomed to receive, were the first motives that led me to invent frequent errands to the town, under the hope of meeting with this man, whom I could not doubt was in love with me:—but in the midst of my expectations, my good mother was seized with a violent fever, which confined me to her bed-side for a month; and I was found so useful in the family that it was

determined I should, from that time, live wholly at home.

“ During this confinement, I often saw my admirer, prowling slowly about the village, and peering over the hedge into our garden, and trying to discover me at some of the windows ; but I never could catch his eye. My mother often talked to me about never marrying young,—and of being cautious who I encouraged, or listened to ; adding that she knew a person, that she should not tell me of yet awhile, whom she did not doubt I should like very well.—I doubted not a moment, but that she meant the gentleman who had been so civil to me, and therefore frankly said, that I knew who it was, and that I liked him vastly.—My dear mother, full of anxiety and tenderness, asked who I meant ; upon which I gave a description of his person, which so surprized her, I feared that my mother would have fainted away.

“ I was

“ I was alarmed—and called to my father ;—he was in his fields ;—but she recovered of herself ;—and as soon as she had strength, entreated me never to listen to him again : for that he was not the person.

“ I was ignorant and credulous,—and insensible of my danger, I determined the next time I saw him to insist on his not coming near the house again.

“ It was on a Sunday evening, when I remained sitting on a green bench, near the road, after my father and mother were gone in ;—it was moon-light ;—he came over a field that lies at the end of the village ;—I rose to go into the house, but he caught me by the hand, and so earnestly entreated to be heard, that I could not deny it ; I could not help listening to the first professions I had ever heard ;—and I was then unacquainted that they could ever be made

without sincerity : my delay brought out my father to seek for me, and not finding me on the bench, his fears and his suspicions made him violent ; and seeing me at a distance, walking with a stranger, he broke out into so loud a rage, that my lover had time only to save himself by flight.

“ After this evening, a few stolen interviews filled me with every partiality ; and the satisfaction I felt in those moments, when no obstacles were thought of, no difficulties proposed, still rest with me as the happiest of my life.”

To this I could bear ample testimony : the energy with which she spoke charmed me.

“ But—alas !” continued she, “ there is a strange tyrannic pride in men, that sets them above control, when by some unguarded look or expression, we let them

them into the secret, that they have gained our preference; they never feel for us what we feel for them. Five or six months passed in this kind of stolen intercourse—he knew in that space of time, what were my usual walks, my calls abroad, and the times when I was most frequently to be met with alone. I was returning home one evening, before the dusk, when he saw me at a distance getting over a stile; he ran towards me, and in a violent manner, very unusual to him, caught me by the arm, and rudely pressed me to his lips;—I was terrified,—and endeavoured to disengage myself;—he swore I should never leave him; and that he knew not how much he loved me;—he seemed agitated by a thousand frightful tumults;—he saw that I was alarmed, and entreated me to forgive him:—I saw no person to whom I could call for assistance, the place was half a mile from home;—I

struggled against him some time, but his impatience surmounted every obstacle!—

“ What became of him I know not ; —I crept home, with no excuse for my delay : my mother, in whom alone I could have confided, was the only person whose innocent mind debarred me from all communication ; my father had a violent temper, which I suspected would, on this occasion, have become uncontrolled ; my brothers and sisters were too young to be corrupted by their sister’s story :—I wandered through the village for three days, frightened at every voice, and trembling at every eye.—I could not add to my own disgrace, the crime of making their honest hearts bleed, with the story of my dishonor, and I knew, that by a sudden flight, their suspicions might be raised, that I had resisted their inclinations, and perhaps had married my seducer.

“ Of the two evils, I chose the latter.
 —Think, Sir, what I endured, in a long journey on foot, made longer by choosing the most private lanes, many miles about, that I might avoid the gaze of the world !
 —When you see us laugh, and hear us chatter the nonsense that first attracts you, you little know the pangs we have suffered, or the misery that has reduced us to this condition !

“ When I arrived in London, all strange and astonishing as it appeared, my strength and my courage failed me : I had no channel by which I could procure a proper lodging ; evening was coming on, and my distresses seemed to encrease : at length I knocked at the door of a house where the word “ lodgings ” was written on the window ;—I was shewn into a small room, where, exhausted with fear and wretchedness, I sunk down the bed, praying that I might never rise again.

“ I need not tell you, that one unhappy step is seldom unaccompanied : I was in London, without a pursuit ; a stranger to the artifices of the cunning and deceitful ;—and a ready prey to all who would offer me protection :—the woman at whose house I had entered, secured what little money I had about me, and then artfully getting from me the truth of my situation, proposed herself as the means of making my fortune, and by flattering my spirits, made me begin to think less seriously of the event which had happened. I cannot go through the numberless intricacies, and unforeseen miseries, to which, from that time, I have fallen a deserving victim : there is scarcely a scene of human distress, to which I have not been eye-witness, and in many of them a severe sufferer ; but for some time past vicissitude has stopped its course, and I have lived sparingly upon the generosity of a man with whom I associated for only two months, on
whose

whose departure for America, I received a present of an hundred pounds."

Oh, how unfortunate, cried I, that such a disposition should be lost from your family !

" They would give all they are worth to find me," said she, " but I could not survive the meeting !"

If that is your only difficulty, let me persuade you to try ; nature may sink at such a moment, but it will revive to new and unknown delight !

" I once knew what filial affection was—but I am sensible of having lost it."

It may be soon regained.——

" Never, never ! I can never do away the anxiety my mother must have suffered ;

suffered ;—and I could not bear my father's look.”——

As soon as they saw you, every frown would be cleared away ;—their joy at your return, would most likely touch them deeper than yourself.——She leant upon her hand.——Suffer me, continued I.——She raised her face, as if going to speak ; I stopped, that I might not interrupt her ;—she looked upward—and sunk back in her chair :—I was fearful she might faint ; I kept my eye upon her countenance, in which she discovered the conflict between shame and resolution.—(It is wonderful to see how much more sincerely people of lively tempers feel than others.)—I began to be agitated half as much as herself.—I felt myself on the moment of saving a lost creature from perdition : I could not restrain my tears.

I walked

I walked hastily across the room——.
Good heaven ! cried I, that such a woman, formed for the happiness of some worthy man, should have been blighted by a foul viper !——

“ Stay, Sir ;—you know not the whole of the story of the man you are about to condemn ;—he was inflamed by more disappointments than he received from my father ; his own affairs.”——

A poor justification ! thought I.——
“ But if I were to return,” said she, “ I should be pointed out among all who know me.”

Then, said I, you may live at any distance ;—once more to return to your parents, would render all their last days comfortable.——She shook her head.

“ You almost convert me ;” said she.
I have never until now met with one
person

person to whom I could unfold my mind : I have no acquaintance with such women as myself ; and the chief part of my time, which was not sacrificed to the interest I was obliged to pursue, has been spent in painful reflection :—but I cannot resolve to return to my family ;—if I thought they were endeavouring to find me, I should avoid them ;—and now, Sir, let us change the subject !”——

Never, madam, while I remain in your company ;—if I am dismissed, I must submit ; but whenever we meet again, I shall endeavour to influence——

“ I am influenced, returned she, but not persuaded ; my fears—for such a moment——”

Are more in imagination than truth ; said I ;—humanity, virtue, honor, united to urge me not to yield up the glory of the pursuit :—but I had lost the moment,
in

in which she was open to persuasion ;— she was roused by my perseverance, which unfortunately inflamed her opposite resolution.——She started, and rose from her seat,——“ What have I done !” cried she wildly.——I took her hand. “ Sir, I have been led by degrees into an unguarded confidence, to one whom I thought was a gentleman ;—I charge you, upon the fidelity of that character, never to let one word that you have heard pass your lips.”—I considered ; I was constrained to promise ; but as no other subject could occupy us, I chose to withdraw.

C H A P. IX.

I RENEWED my visit every evening, for some time, without being admitted; —I sought her in the place where we had first met, but in vain: I had one evening walked the usual round, when returning through St. James's street, I perceived a croud gathering round a fruiterer's shop: although it was my general rule not to add to the number of gazers in a croud, curiosity led me to look into the shop, where I discovered a young man, with his hands clasped together, and exclaiming loud enough to attract the public notice,—"She is my own Sophia, my dear Sophia."—The lady sat half fainting in a chair;—she seemed to resemble the very woman for whom I was so much interested. I
broke

broke through the croud, and having found that my conjecture was right, presented myself before her :—she started, and putting her hand upon my arm, hoped I would now be her friend.—

The young man, filled with horror at a seeming preference, fixed his eyes upon me with wild amazement and anger, and demanding who I was, in a tone of more firmness than at any other time I could have borne, began to shew himself more sincerely the seducer, but still the lover of his Sophia. He laboured for words,—his face was flushed with indignation,—he stamped on the floor, and with an air of right, such as a man assumes who claims the sole possession of a woman's heart and person, required me to follow him into the back room. Sophia insisted on accompanying us :—the people of the house were surprised by the scene, but made no opposition,—and withdrew.

The

The young gentleman sunk into a chair, and for some time covered his face with his handkerchief:—Sophia told me, that she had stopped at this shop about half an hour before to buy some fruit;—that this young man stood for some minutes at the window, and when she was going out again into the street, he rushed upon her with the impetuosity of a lion upon his prey, and before she had time to see his face, he threw his arms about her rapturously, and by his voice soon discovered to her that he was the person she had described to me.—He rose hastily from his seat, when he heard that we were conversing; and coming up to me,——“ I am not too weak,” said he, “ to resist an insult;—I have suffered much for this lady;—I have fought her in vain; since a long and painful absence, accident has now brought us together, but it shall be no accident that shall separate us: did you not find us in so strange and ambiguous a moment,

ment, it would be no time for parley; but, Sir, I am so nearly attached to her, —But, is she married?—Are you her husband?”——We both answered in the negative.—“Then, by all that is sacred,” cried he, “all that is dear between man and woman, I have loved her, and will defend my love for her, by all the powers with which this arm is vested.”

I desired him to be pacified.—Sophia sat down by him.—I proposed that we should adjourn to her lodgings.——“S’death, Sir,” said he, “are you so intimate?—Oh Sophia! Sophia!—But why do I complain? Sir, if you have dared ——”

I begged him to be pacified,—and a few moments would clear away every doubt.

As soon as we were seated at Sophia’s apartment, in Bennet street,—I related
to

to him, in very few words, the subject of the only interview which I had ever been honored with from Sophia.

“How did that interview happen?” said he.——“By mere accident,—said I.——Sophia trembled—and burst into tears.——

Vexation flashed from his eyes;—he knew too well the consequences of his own misconduct to be wrong, in ascribing to that cause the condition of Sophia’s life, which he now clearly discovered. “Oh, I am justly punished;” said he.—“I had hoped that what I have suffered in silence might have expiated the offence for which my heart hourly reproaches me,—but the sting is sharpened:——Oh, Sophia, while I have been torn with unceasing remorse, your breast—but, perhaps, while I waste the time thus, I am sitting with one whose passions have been allayed in that bosom, which contains

tains a heart once devoted, in its days of innocence, to such a wretch as me.

—This satisfaction, Sir, I must at least demand.”——I assured him, that I knew nothing of Sophia, but the agony of a virtuous mind, struggling with its own remorse; that I had endeavoured to persuade her to return to her family, but which was a pleasure reserved for himself.

“I will deem you then a gentleman,” said he, “as such let me hope to be excused, if my situation has thrown me into expressions, which, at another time, I should be sorry to have uttered.”

He then declared that his name was Darmer.—

Darmer ! interrupted I.—“Yes, Sir, I lost my father many years ago,—I was an only child; and have a mother living in this neighbourhood, whom I have
not

not seen for years ; for very shortly after my father's death, some difficulties were started by her lawyers about a considerable part of my fortune, and which, by an artful construction which the words of his will may bear, she has appropriated to herself what my father clearly designed to be my share of his estates : but of this, no matter ; if my Sophia will divide the rest——”

“ Oh, Mr. Darmer,” exclaimed she, “ your Sophia deserves no generosity !”

“ If she will forgive him, he may again hope for happiness,” said he. “ I have made some addition to the little fortune I received, by one voyage to the East-Indies, which will finish all the extent of my ambition.——Sophia shall never hear from my lips one word of discontent or reproach ;—and if she will now accept the heart as her own, which has never left her, we will request your company,

company, Sir, to her father's house, where, with their blessing, we may be united for ever !”

“ Generous Darmer,” exclaimed she, full of tears and emotion ; “ your Sophia will not hesitate to confess how much she loved, and still loves you !—But she has nothing to offer you, but a heart already torn with the keenest reflections, and—”

Darmer was impatient to give full vent to the sensations he felt,—he threw himself at her feet,—he pressed her hand to his lips,—and looking in her face,—“ My lost, my injured Sophia, again restored to my beating heart !”——He rose from the ground,—and turning towards me, took me cordially by the hand, but was unable to speak.—Sophia had come round to the place where we were standing,—joy and tenderness glistering in her eye, she leant upon his shoulder, and as her face reclined, big

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drops stole insensibly upon our hands.—We were all overpowered.—Darmer caught her to his heart.—“My own Sophia!” said he, in trembling accents.—After some moments, in which I was a willing spectator of the tender conflict between affection and remorse, I had the joy to see the latter predominate.—We then settled the hour of our setting off on the next morning, and Darmer and myself left the poor Sophia to her own reflections.

The party filled a post-chaise; we found Sophia ready at six o'clock for the journey.—It was a wedding-day to Darmer, but Sophia had some trials before the sun-shine of happiness could dawn. The lot fell upon me to promote cheerfulness; in which I was often interrupted by those numberless little poignances which involuntarily burst from them both.—If true remorse ever darted its pangs into an honest heart,
and

still kept it alive to virtue,—Darmer was the man who thus expiated his crime. Sophia's conflict was by far the most severe;—her own errors,—her doubts of a kind reception,—her fears of the proposed union being prevented,—and her inability to sustain the reproaches she expected, were sufficient to have alarmed even an obdurate heart;—but we found a few intervals when the beauties of nature and the charm of mutual tenderness alleviated her anxiety.

It was early in the afternoon, when we arrived within sight of the house;—Sophia's heart failed her;—every object that we passed renewed some innocent pastime; some past pleasure; some source of regret;—and as we drove within view of the fatal spot—she hid her face, with her hands clasped together;—Darmer felt, but could say nothing for her comfort.—There are times of distress, when little can be offered to soothe the mind!

At length we entered a copse, through a lane, which turning from the high road leads to the farm-house.—Just before we arrived at the yard-gate, it was agreed that Darmer and myself only should alight.—Some of the countrymen were gathering about the farm-yard, to see who should come in a post-chaise.

An old man, who was employed as a looker, and had been upon the farm many years, remembered Sophia, and not suppressing his astonishment, hastened before us into the house, calling out, “Here’s Miss Sophy come again!—Ah, what would my poor master have said to this?”——“Well, if she be married to one of these gentlemen,” said his wife, it’s all well, ben’t it?”——

The noise had brought out the old lady from her parlour,—and seeing her daughter in the chaise, rushed past us to welcome her arrival; Sophia alighted
from

from the chaise in an instant, and almost before she had quitted it, found herself in her mother's arms.—No conception, no language, no description, can ever give the most distant idea of the scene: it would be absurd to attempt that wherein Gothe himself would have failed! Sophia was at length overwhelmed.—“Support my child!” said her weeping mother, scarce able herself to call for our assistance.—We conducted them into the parlour, where, after a short time, I related the general story of their present affairs.—The old lady had all the sweetness of a Mrs. Shirley, with all her tenderness of disposition: compassion seemed to be a leading feature in her breast, and it brought along with it a fond mother's pardon for the indiscretions of a darling child.—We thought it might be prudent to leave them together, and having taken a short circuit round the fields that lay contiguous to the house, we learnt from the old man, that Master

Harland died about three months after Sophia went to London : and upon our return, we wanted no testimonies to prove that this had been one of the subjects which had engaged the attention of his widow and her daughter.

Darmer grew impatient that the design of their visit might be explained :—he endeavoured to address Mrs. Harland himself,—" May I hope, madam," said he, " to be considered as the sincere lover of your daughter ?—I cannot so freely—say—what my heart—dictates—on this occasion,—impute it, I beseech you, to the anxiety I feel, till I am honored with your blessing."——

Mrs. Harland was silent,—she fixed her eyes on the ground ;—Sophia's fine face was overflowed ;—we waited in expectation of an answer ;—I would have ventured something in Darmer's favor,
but

but I had too lately experienced the danger of preventing a reply.

“What would my dear husband have said, in this trying moment? I was never much averse to your attentions to my girl, but”——she sobbed aloud;—and taking her daughter’s hand, and bathing it in her tears,—“I hope you deserve her, Mr. Darmer;—she was a good girl, till——”

“Spare me, madam,” cried Darmer, “she is still good.”——

“And now you have brought her home, it is only to carry her away again.—You must not, indeed you must not.—I have none of my children left but her, and my first friend is gone too, to shew us the way.”

Suffer me, said I, as a friend to all parties, to propose a way of making you

all happy;—Mr. Darmer's intentions are truly honorable; make him the man he anxiously desires to be, in making him your son, and as long and as often as his affairs will permit his absence from London, they will stay and contribute to your comfort, by their own happiness.

Mrs. Harland felt like a mother, mistrustful of a man who had rifled the honor of her child,—but she reflected also as a woman, and nourished the hope that dwells upon unlimited confidence. “And will you make her a good husband?” said she. That he will, said I; I would offer to be a bondsman that he will.—

“And what,” said she, “does my Sophia say to all this? Does she join in this request?”

“I cannot deny it,” said the daughter.

The

The old lady paused for some minutes; but at length, while the tears fell from her eyes, and her bosom heaved with nature's unaffected tenderness, she united both their hands, and casting up to heaven a look that was the effort of piety alone—"God bless my children!" said she—and sunk back into her chair.

I was melted into a child's weakness;—I should else have been unfit for such a scene,—nay more, unfit for humanity: but to be a spectator of such a scene, was to enjoy a luxury of soul, which no affluence could purchase, nor splendor outvie!

We passed the rest of the evening in domestic conversation; in discussing the subject of the wedding, which after I had contributed a little to overturn a few obstacles, was agreed upon for the following day. Mrs. Harland sent for a person in the village, whom her husband

had left joint executor with herself,—and having communicated to him the intended marriage,—he expressed his disapprobation, in terms so inhuman and unpolished, that I had some difficulty to keep Darmer from exerting himself;—he said, “that to give a sanction to such a wedding, was as good as to encourage a couple of young sinners in the road to hell;—whereas they ought to be let go to their own desolation.”—But old Harland had never altered his will, and Sophia being the only child that remained alive, became sole heiress of the farm and lands adjoining, after the decease of her mother.

Early on the following day, Darmer went to the neighbouring town, to procure the usual licence, and to settle every preparation at the church, where we all assembled soon after; and where I hope that the office I then took upon me, has been the means of mutual happiness to all parties.

The news of the wedding soon spread through the village, and when we returned home, we were met by a party of the country people, who began to hallow the nuptials with garlands and country-sports.—It would have gratified me to have mingled in their dances, and to have seen the innocent mirth of hilarity and good-will,—but my own affairs demanded my return ;—I embraced my friend Darmer and his wife, who now wore the smile of conscious satisfaction ; and paying due respect to her worthy mother, I tore myself away from a circle, which would have taught me justly to despise the busy hum of men, who reject the charms of nature for pomp, artifice, and wealth !

How truly does the author of *Julia de Roubigné* assert, that “ the tie which binds the happy, is dear ; but that which links the unfortunate, is tediousness unutterable.”

C H A P. X.

I NEED not engage the reader with my reflections, during my journey to town.—That I should meet with a woman of such a disposition, in such a walk of life, in such a frame of mind ;—that she should at length put upon me an office the most honorable and interesting ; and that the son of a woman, whose manners and conduct I had always despised, should be the object of all our attention ! —Such leading features were occupation enough for a day's journey ;—but I was also eager to advance my own progress, and seemed to feel myself mortified, at being made a confidant in every one's affairs, but my own.—It was seldom I could challenge many vague moments, but now I was overburdened with thought ;

thought ; all concentring in the leading wish of my mind, the grand project of being once the possessor of an amiable heart, that could freely acknowledge that it loved me ; the fond master of a little circle ; the father of a rising family !

I counted over my little fortune, and built upon my expectations ;—with moderate ideas, I had no cause to tremble at its insufficiency, but I lamented the slow progress by which all these affairs are brought to a favorable issue. Besides, Miss Cleavland moved in a circle, where interest could not induce her friends to hasten an attachment, for the sake of interest, or even rank, and I had nothing to offer, which could induce them to give me a preference.—Involuntarily I recurred back to the happiness with which I was once entrusted, by the first mistress of my heart—still transcendent in mind, in person, in all the benign dignity of woman !—For a moment I was guilty of
a sigh,

a sigh, which told me to stifle the murmur of weak human nature!—When she left this transient scene, all other women became equal in my mind; but its indifference was like the clouds of a summer's-day, which serve only to refresh the beauties of the landscape.

In early life, every charm is new; the face of nature is clothed in smiles; but as life grows on, these blossoms change, the fruit becomes common, and degeneracy palls the taste!—But we owe this to ourselves, not to any fault in nature; for we have ourselves corrupted the delight, the spirit, the true religion of the heart to enjoy it!—The loss of friends, the frauds of interest, the contumely of pride, the insolence of rank and power, and “the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to,”—all tend, in accumulated succession, to shut out from our hearts, that noble and virtuous animation, which invigorates the morning of
our

our days;—too soon we learn to call that enthusiasm, which once was virtue; to chide our energies; and reprove our generous zeal, as hasty and misguided passion: and at length, learn to scoff at the chief blessings of life, because our own inconstancy will not suffer us to relish them!

These busy reflections, served but to convince me, that unless I could soon effect the first object of my mind, it was most probable that I should add to the number of those whose tempers I have described. All my friends united in the wish that I should marry, and took the pains very seriously to recommend objects;—but I remarked, that to a man the least acquainted with the world, this method is the most certain to keep him single:—a choice must be spontaneous and free.

My

My female acquaintance was tolerably extensive ;—my freedom of manners led me always to easy intimacies ; and my temper formed itself into a love of that spirit of conversation, which always pervades the conspicuous gaiety of female life.

If I could have presumed upon the few opportunities which had been offered me, of meeting Miss Cleavland, I could not have chosen a time in which my feelings would have interested me more in the progress of a declaration :—but I considered how little I yet knew of her ; connections are not the only thing to be sought, there is a certain unison of conduct and sentiment, which alone can render home fascinating, and enliven the hours of still and calm affection.

My sister informed me, that all the Cleavland family were in town, but that the Mansells were very shortly going abroad :

abroad :—two very interesting articles of intelligence to me, which it was necessary to improve to my advantage.

The intimacy which had so long subsisted between those families, contributed to establish a pleasing familiarity between the Cleavlands and my brother and sister, and having all so often met together, the circle seemed to imbibe a mutual friendship for each other, which I took every method to promote. It was not long before we were all united by those social ties which bind the union of friendship,—my father's family were gradually interwoven,—and I looked on and beheld the promising glory of all my hopes.

We found the Cleavlands, on a nearer view, to be guided more by elegance than high fashion ;—their pleasures were those of virtuous taste, and an extensive acquaintance had rendered them, with a careful education, generally affable and
polite :

polite:—my attentions insensibly increased; I was elated at securing an intimacy, and lest I should run too fast in my career, my brother often put a bar in the way of some engagement, some party, or some unthinking scheme, into which my vanity ensnared me.

A desire to please, numerous attracting accomplishments, a brilliancy and pleasantry of countenance, divested of caprice, and ignorant of her own superiority, were not the only charms which now awakened the boundless joy I felt;—added to all these, was a ready conversation, and a dawn of preference, which often singled me out for a party, an opinion, or a book.

My heart leapt with joy above its bounds,—my senses glowed with unspeakable delight, and my hours, were hours of bliss, for which all language is inadequate to their praise; I grew verbose
in.

in the praises of a woman, whom I had yet no right to call my mistress;—I gloried in the admiration of her virtues, —I spoke my zeal by every act of assiduous attention. There was such an innate goodness of heart, such a purity of sentiment, such an unmingled serenity of mind, so principled a rectitude of judgment, and so delicate a sense of religion —that of what could I have been formed, not to be an enthusiast?—Every moment passed in her company seemed to amend and refine my heart.

I no longer doubted that I loved!—But from many small occasions that offered themselves to my observation, I thought I discovered, that though my family were upon an equality with hers, yet it was rank which seemed to occupy some of her father's hopes.

What sensation thrills the heart, when suspense is overclouded by fear and doubt!

The

The subject was too tender for my mind. Books, business, action, and thought, all led me to this sole and distinguishing object;—yet I still perceived that a favorable moment for opening my mind was not yet arrived.

Thus do the affections of a man's heart lead all his early days; his passions roused by imagination, and inflated by hope, agitate his frame, and fill him with either rapture or desperation. If his reflections are unbounded, he soars into energies uncontrollable;—if they are too confined, he sinks into apathy;—if he steers a moderate course, he is overwhelmed with indifference! But, thanks be to God, for the illumination of sensibility; a seal of the human system, which unites the organs of vitality to the soul! awakens us from the dream of sense, and enwraps the contemplation of every blessing poured forth from heaven's abundance!—Without it, every star
might

might shine in its orb—the sun might irradiate its wide expanse,—time might revolve,—and all that is around us, nay we ourselves might pass away, ignorant of the blessings for which we were made!

But, notwithstanding this boast of a ray so sublime, passion, and mere animal passion too, forms a very considerable portion of that system we denominate love!—And this is a truth, which will shake the purity of many an honorable attachment, and reduce to the level of plain truth, much of those forms and questionable shapes which assiduity wears!

My regard was now matured by judgment, and the perception of every endearing qualification! Even fortune, the bugbear of our lives, never wore a frown: but the civilization of the world rendered delays and forms and etiquettes necessary, that the eye of vulgar prejudice might
not

not impertinently suggest that the lady was too hasty in her encouragement.

I was concerned to find that the Manfells were so soon to leave England, knowing that my brother's intimacy with the Cleavlands was of too short a date to render me those essential services which I could depend upon with their older companion Mrs. Manfell. When I called upon them, I found them preparing for their departure, which they had determined to take place in less than a month;—whether the cause of it was business or pleasure did not belong to me to enquire, but I learnt that their absence would be about two years.—Two years! said I to Mrs. Manfell, what will happen to me in the space of two years?—

“That's a question you should ask Miss Cleavland,” said she.—That I would if I dared, returned I.

“Can

“Can a man so happy as you want
 courage now?” said Mr. Mansell.

I am happy, said I, but I want to be
 happier—I want to know——“You
 know enough,” interrupted he; “if your
 case had been mine, I should have proposed
 the question long ago;—never despair,
 you have had encouragement enough,—
 they all speak well of you,—and I’ll let
 you into a secret, the coast is all clear
 —nobody else stands in the way.”

I caught these words, as a voice from
 heaven!——Some company entered,—
 I was lost the whole evening,—lost only to
 them,—present with that treasure where
 my heart was fixed!—But finding their
 conversation too great an interruption,
 I stole off unobserved to pour into my
 brother’s ear the intelligence I had re-
 ceived.

But

But in this hope I was interrupted—by finding a lady sitting with them whose appearance wore the garb of sorrow in the extreme :—as I approached, I remembered the features of Miss Lambert, at present disguised in the unfavorable veil of widow's weeds ;—little more than a year had elapsed since we parted.

“ Mrs. Garnel,” said my brother, “ was just beginning to relate some circumstances that will be interesting to you, as one of her friends.” I could not defer her story to relate mine, nor could I plead an engagement.—Mrs. Garnel proceeded.

C H A P. XL.

“MY mother,” said she, “after the last act of friendship you did for us, suffered much anxiety and extortion, which our slender income could ill repair. We received letters from a relation at Berne, describing the place and its accommodations in such a manner, as to invite us to take up our residence there. My mother conceived the prospect favourable, which, encreasing by daily conversation, led us at last to the resolution of leaving England. To avoid the pain of answering numberless questions, we determined not to take leave of any one. If my mother ever projected a scheme, she lived on thorns till it was executed : and to this ardent spirit may be ascribed the perseverance that we endured in a voyage

which was accompanied with numberless difficulties.

“ We had not been long at my cousin’s house, in Berne, before my mother died ; and having attended her to the grave, I had no other wish but to return home : but the family, to which she had thus introduced me, made me so much one of themselves, that I resolved to stay with them.

“ A young gentleman, in the house, who was learning the nature of mercantile affairs, frequently saw me at the times of family meetings, and I pleased him. His disposition seemed to be warm and resolute—he conceived strong impressions, and they never left him : his love and his aversion were equally zealous and sincere. It was my lot to secure the former. He possessed every qualification that could render his company agreeable. He had fortune to supply all
the

the comforts I could expect; but he had contracted an irascibility, which often shaded his other virtues. In the transaction of his affairs, he was too ready to esteem those things as insults which had arisen only as the natural pursuits of interests; and he was often led to change his friendships and his schemes, as his impetuous temper induced him: but this disposition served only to encrease his professions to me:—no obstacle opposed him, and I gave him my hand. We lived in the most perfect harmony together—his affection softened his temper, and rendered him an amiable character.

“ Not far from the town we took a small house, where he spent with me every leisure that his affairs would permit. In three months time his father died; and having cleared off a few incumbrances which he had left behind him, we removed farther into the country, with a fortune sufficient for our

comfort for the rest of our lives. His pursuits were elegant and instructive—his manners agreeable—and his conduct that of the kindest affection: he gave me a new zest for every one of those poor accomplishments which I had long ago resolved to discontinue.

“ Mr. Garnel mingled with vivacity all the sympathy of a generous mind: he was deaf to no distress, nor deserted the cause of sorrow, for any obstacle he could remove:—danger never stopped him in his pursuit.

“ His sister had been his constant companion and bosom friend, till his marriage: she had, however, passed two reluctant years in England, where she had received the attentions of a young man, who was the owner of a plantation in the West Indies. Upon her return home, they had supplied the pain of absence by a very frequent correspondence,
partly

partly from England, and partly from Jamaica, where he had gone since her return; and he had lost no opportunity to persuade her to permit him to take a voyage, for the sole purpose of marrying her, and conducting her to his home.

“ Mr. Garnel saw no obstacle to their union; and such had been their acknowledged affection, that she freely consented to save him the trouble, by undertaking the voyage alone. On the eve of her departure, my husband, who had oftentimes testified a look of melancholy and depression, could now no longer restrain his desire of accompanying her. It was not without some reluctance that I was brought to consent; and every necessary being hastily prepared, they set forward together, little supposing how much their departure would darken all the comforts of my future life.

“ After a tempestuous voyage, they arrived at an unfavourable season of the year, and my husband in no situation to resist the vicissitude of climate. Add to which, that they found the hero of the romance, a lord of an extensive territory, trampling upon the comforts and natural birthright of near two thousand innocent victims to his pride and interest, and a slave to lust and ambition. A character so different from that which had appeared to her in England, could not be supposed to inspire her with any new satisfaction on her arrival. Every object which attracted her eye was indolence, extortion, and profligate debauchery. The negroes had learnt of their masters to mistake these for the characteristics of Christianity; and where the lash did not command their unpitied labours, their vexation and disappointment rendered them dangerous.

“ Garnet

“Garnel himself had no other friend or correspondent in those parts; and therefore giving all allowances to mere report, they put themselves under the direction of an old negro, whom they saw on their landing, who conducted them to the house. A negro wench who admitted them, and whether from ignorance or envy is not very material, conducted them into a room, where they discovered the truth of the reports they had heard. The unseasonable confusion into which all parties were thrown need not be described—the most violent imprecations echoed through the house, with the most cruel denunciations of punishment against the servant, for her mistake; and when the other had left the room, the young lover attempted to receive his guests with an air of innocent assurance, as if they had been welcome; but Garnel could ill brook an act of such flagrant infidelity, in the very moment when their arrival might have been expected.

pected. His sister precipitately left the house, though it was night, and she knew not into what hands she might fall.

“ Garnel, in this consternation, could spare no time to parley with a man he was resolved to chastise. He overtook his sister in the next street, where the young man soon after joined them. He pressed them to return: he pleaded the climate, the manners of the country, and many other lame excuses, than which silence had better served him. My husband demanded of him a reparation for the injury, which nothing less than his life could satisfy. Professions of his regard—the inducements for such a voyage—the consequences to my sister, which became too apparent—were all sources of agony in Garnel’s upright heart, which no acknowledgments could repair.— ‘ You had an undoubted right,’ said Garnel, ‘ to risk your own character; but

but you had no right to tamper, at the same time, with so dear a part of my family. While you were receiving from her the most candid assurances of her affection, you were indulging yourself in the most riotous excesses. My sister is exposed to the shame of a fruitless voyage.—She is obliged to wait till another vessel sails from this island; and your barbarous villainy is to be sheltered under the thin veil of the customs of your country.’

“ A hasty appointment was made for the next morning. Garnel conducted his sister to a boarding house, where she sunk under the weight of disappointment and consternation. A delirium seized her—she was exhausted—and few hopes of life remained. Garnel performed all the kind offices of a brother and a friend. He listened to her story, and thus calmed her rambling brain. But even now she discovered the excellence of an unsus-

pecting heart ;—her ideas, though unconnected, were liberal and pure ; and though she disdained her lover, yet she prayed to be forgiven for her contempt ; but not one ray of consolation shone upon her brother. He watched her with unremitting attention—he saw her worn out with all the agony of unrequited love—and his apprehensions pictured to him all the fatal consequences of despair !

“ In this state of mind, think what must have been his feelings on so trying an occasion. Rage may, perhaps, have added vigour to his courage, but it set him above caution. The affray was long and serious ; but in the moment that he overcame his adversary, he received a wound that marked him for an early grave ! Both parties were carried off the field without hopes of recovery. My husband paid too little regard to his own situation, while he saw his beloved sister a wasting spectre, whose feeble
voice

voice plainly told the speedy dissolution of all her earthly misery. A few days terminated the gentle light that feebly flamed within her, and she expired in the serenity of exhausted nature.

“ Mr. Garnel performed the last services to his sister; and necessity then obliged him to pay some attention to himself. His wound became serious—he had received the point of his antagonist’s sword on his left side—a change of climate became immediately necessary; but he determined not to leave the island without seeing the man whom he had disarmed.

“ He found him, agitated by remorse and vexation; his mind raged with unceasing agonies, and his heart seemed to burn with the most perturbed tumults. The loss of the woman to whom his honour was pledged, was no part of the distress he endured—that he had been

the cause of her death was not an object he fought for—his infidelity never disturbed his conscience—but, he had been disarmed!—he had petitioned for his life at the feet of the man he had already wounded—here his pride, his prowess, his skill took alarm; and they were subjects of more consequence than either conscience, infidelity, or honour!—But they kept alive the scorpion in his breast, that punished him more than death!

“ Garnel returned home, after a tedious and miserable voyage, time enough to relate these few leading circumstances of the tragedy, and to breathe his last!—I had planned much satisfaction on his return, by presenting to him a son, from whose birth I was but lately recovered; but he had no power to caress him, or to express the fondness of a father:—his wound had been unskilfully treated, and he died in the torments of a rapid inflammation.

“ I was

“ I was now a stranger, in a foreign country—my distress rendered me helpless—and my only prospect of comfort was to be sought in the circle of a few friends at home, whose compassion might, in some degree, alleviate my future days.”

Here Mrs. Garnel, and her friends, wiped away their tears.—Oh, may this weakness ever rest endeared to this breast whenever distress presents itself before me!—May I never be so tempered by the ways of life as to be deaf to these calls of virtue, which give birth to the tenderest compassion; or so selfish as to withhold the humble pittance of my power, to relieve the miseries of human existence!

I was in a state of mind to indulge the warmest feelings. Romance of disposition, and some degree of natural compassion, always unite in a lover's breast
to

to covet the tale of tenderness and sympathy. Among the many moments of our young and unconnected days, when devoid of care, and free to sip the charm of every fair blossom, we often turn aside from our pleasures, and sigh for some alien woe, that calls forth the flame which illumines the path of life, and cheers us, while it points to matrimonial cares:—we smile at the awful word, and laugh at its consequences; but never fail to put down to our good account the pleasure we receive in tender communications!

C H A P. XII.

THEY all speak well of me, said I to my brother; and nobody else stands in the way.

“If Mansell had authority for saying so,” said my brother, “I’ll wish you good speed on your journey:—but what prevents your declaration? Examine yourself—are you quite at home yourself?”

I was shocked!—I started!—My sister was alarmed! Indeed, said I, I have no affair upon my hands.

“Why delay then?” said my brother. “What says your father to it?” Fully pleased, and satisfied, answered I. He
is

is generous and candid—his behaviour to me has real excellence.

“Come then, you are cowardly—you want to be courted yourself. Let me advise you:—if you don’t open your mind very soon you’ll not be admitted; and then you will be too late. The name of a dangler, and a hanger on, is too despicable for your character: besides, the world notices your intimacy; if you don’t put a serious conclusion to it, you injure the lady, which, perhaps, your life ought to answer for.” I trembled. “I speak thus strongly,” said my brother, “that you may reflect on the unpardonable conduct of some young men, who get into families—render their attentions particular—are well received—and, at last, when the young woman has lost other opportunities, an explanation takes place, and some obvious difficulties stand in the way, which ought to have prevented their first acquaintance.

There

There is a vanity about all young men in gay spirits, that makes them fancy they see attentions, and enjoy confidences, almost in the midst of perfect indifference. It is because they are ardently looking for them; and they exist only on the smiles of female encouragement."

I knew that all this was unanswerable;—I knew that I loved Miss Cleveland; but this was scarcely in my power to declare, for I doubted whether what my brother had said might not be applicable to my familiar intercourse with the Harley family. Surely, thought I, they cannot have any claim upon me. I resolved upon a visit, to try this last and most important ground of my future happiness.

I have forgot to tell the reader, that Mr. Harley died some time since, and had left a very handsome fortune to his daughter,

daughter, independent of what was to come to her at her mother's death; so that her notions might be supposed to have been a little exalted, since she had found herself so much her own mistress, and independant of the world; but in disposition and temper I found her the same.

I thought that I admired her capacity still more than ever. Her understanding, and her good sense—her natural generosity, and free spirit, were objects of my warmest approbation: her accomplishments always gave me peculiar pleasure, but her petulance gave me disgust. She was susceptible of all the bolder passions, but possessed few of those smaller vibrations, which awaken the involuntary tear, or breathe the gentle sigh! By the bursting flood, by the agonizing pang, by the soul's unconquerable swell, she testified her grief:—laughter, rather than smiles, proclaimed her joy;—her pleasure was noise, rather than chearfulness;

ness ;—the theatre, the crowded ball, the hurry of a masquerade, had all charms for her, which soared far above the placid delights of a contemplative soul ! Still I saw a fund of eminent virtues, which would spring forth with new vigour, as soon as youth had exhausted this round of external gaiety—when she beheld a little family clinging around her—when sensibility would teach her the tenderness of a mother—and when her gay fancies would die away.

What, if this woman could love me, said I to myself :—her generous ardour would warm and animate a return. I would testify my love by every mark of kind and assiduous regard : she never could be cold and indifferent ;—she is too honourable to be a coquet ;—but if she proved a hypocrite, I would leave her to her own shame : and then, ever sensible and amiable Harriet, thy soft nature would recur upon my aching breast, and
 engrave

engrave the mistaken characters of my folly in pangs indelible! I trembled in my imaginary fears.—Oh, that my conscientious heart were released from this bond!—then could I fly to thee, mistress of every virtue! But weak, and short sighted creature that I am;—born for the trifles of the world—to be the sport of fortune—and the scoff of vain sensibility!

My thoughts entrapped me into a mental swoon, and carried me above the race of sublunary things. I dreamed on amid a wild vortex of unrestrained idea—traced the chain of being—marked my own creeping progress, and beheld how poor and small a creature I was; and then laughed at all this plotting and contriving for phantoms of happiness, and all this exulting riot of fantastic love, which plays the tyrant in our hearts, and renders us more various than the wild zephyrs that blow around us,

My

My examination of myself thus ended where it began. Human nature was never born with firmness to conquer that self partiality which prevents 'a free examination. Thus I found myself encompassed :—I struggled to shake off the toil ; but in rustling to be free, I became faster bound.

I resolved to open the subject : I was unable to bear the imputation of indifference, which I always despised as a tergiversation in the human composition—next to cowardice in the field ! My difficulties pressed upon me. I had no subject to open—if I did not mean to make a proffer of my regard. If I meant not to offer the terms of union, I had nothing to require her attention to. If my intercourse continued, I could never become indifferent ; and absence, which was the only resource, I had no resolution to prefer.—O, pity a creature, whose heart is a trespasser on his prudence!—

dence!—who is unable to answer the impulses of his nature, and whose soul, mounting high on wings soaring far above the regular progression of human affairs, sinks into perplexity!—Oh, that the common feelings of the heart were always suffered to vent themselves—that man were at liberty to follow the impulsive ardour of a pure affection—and were never obliged to restrain the exulting spirit of truth, and the glorious emanation of generous humanity! But we must not pray for a golden age;—in that there would be no probation—which is the end of human life.

I found it necessary to defer my explanation, and to chase away danger by an interchange of company. Familiar indifference to every woman procures all their courtesy, because each hopes to make the conquest:—in a few days I laughed at my past anxieties; but they had

had not abated sufficiently to allow me to see Miss Cleavland.

I had known Miss Harley for many years; and I had been informed that women of any singularity seldom consent to marry a man, whose long acquaintance has given him opportunities of knowing too much of their characters:—I counted upon this. What a strange situation of mind—to be made happy by circumstances which could, in any manner, tend to prove, that the woman I admired did not love me.

I resolved to pursue my intimacy a little closer, in order that a speedy determination might be put to my fears. I saw her, dispersing her encouragements to new objects, without any apparent distinction. I received favours one day, which were repeated the next to others:—she seemed not to aspire to one permanent

ment attachment, but to deceive herself into a false idea of universal power.

I was one afternoon indulged with Miss Harley's company alone, in a walk to a neighbouring cottage. In such parties there is a bewitching confidence, which sets up a man's vanity, and awakens his passion. It was one of those afternoons, in May, when the sun had not yet parched up the luxuriant elegance of nature. We found the good woman, and a neighbour, sitting at the cottage door, and both their little families were mingled together on the green before them. I made a scramble of some filberts among them, which added to their merriment. The cottage stood near the side of a lane, and was overshadowed by a hedge-row of tall elms; the country round it was beautifully variegated; and the perfume of new mown hay, wild roses, and sweetbriar, united to ensnare this foolish heart of mine in all the bonds of tender-

tendernefs :—I felt the little deity spread his web around me—I admired the objects that prefented themfelves—I admired my companion—and felt, or fancied, that I loved her—I coveted every kifs ſhe gave the little ones that came about her, and betrayed an energy of foul, which told her the impuſes under which I laboured.

What a fine ebullition of foul mingles its benignant charm in ſcenes like this! —when virtue, honor, ſincerity, confidence, and paſſion, are ſtruggling for ſuperiority! As we returned ſhe folded her arm in mine—I preſſed her hand—I am not, cannot be inſenſible, ſaid I.—“ I don’t think you are quite,” interrupted ſhe, taking away her arm.—I was ſilenced; and had not the immediate approach of a young gentleman, very well mounted, put a ſtop to the ſcene, my caſe would in another moment have become deſperate: but having walked

his horse, to enjoy our conversation, he arrived with us at Mrs. Harley's, where his welcome reception from both mother and daughter would have been sufficient explanation of his pretensions, had not Mrs. Harley introduced me as a very old and confidential friend.

I never drank the healths of any bride and bridegroom with more real and unfeigned joy than I did theirs: my joy was accepted for friendship, and I withdrew from their company with a heart as light as the dew of the morning, or as a lover raised to the summit of his wish.

Oh, woman, woman!—is it possible to penetrate any one of thy whims and fancies, thy views, thy projects and counter-projects, thy plots, thy versatilities, and thy wiles!—Such is the lot of human nature, or rather the folly of our weak hearts. Reader, if thou hast
ever

ever known these soft engagements, and
woo'd the sisterhood of indulgent hope,
my tale will not excite thy derision, nor
provoke thy pitiless scorn.

C H A P. XIII.

THE time drew near for Mr. Mansell's intended departure. It was with greater satisfaction I could now repeat my acknowledgements for their friendship, than I had imagined myself able to do but a few days before. Mrs. Mansell informed me, that she had not suffered an opportunity to pass by, without improving it to my advantage. It is well I have avoided one quicksand then, thought I. She said, that having very lately passed an whole day in Grosvenor Square, by way of *congé* visit, she had some conversation with the young ladies about a young man whom she had some times seen there, whose countenance did not betray many marks of indifference to Harriet; that she was very well assured,
from

from some symptoms she then discovered, that my own happiness was in my power : but she added, that since I had last seen them, a curious circumstance had been brought to light, which, after giving considerable pain, has terminated in the amicable joy of the whole family.

“ The characters that filled the world,” said Mrs. Mansell, “ are such, that if the world knows them not, they are unhappy ;—if they know not the world, they are ashamed of themselves, and become the cast-offs of their companions. And what is it to be blessed with this mighty knowledge ?—To know the fashionable vices of the age, to swear with becoming assurance, to pay no debts but those of a disgraceful honor, and to laugh modesty out of countenance. It is a melancholy truth, that so few of us ever think, or give ourselves time to preserve in our hearts the just balance of

true principle!—and this lost, the happiness of life is irrecoverable.

“ Mr. Cleavland had acquired a pleasing taste for literature: his politeness restrained him from being disputatious, and his only business was that of doing good. His wife was a kind hearted woman, whom he had married more for her good qualities than for her elegance;—was an adept in all matronly subjects, and had an ear for every body's tale, and a heart and a purse for every body's woe.” Surely, said I, the world have, upon the whole, a fair account to settle; if they are to be debited with vices and follies, they will certainly be credited for philanthropy and benevolence.——“ Mr. Cleavland,” continued Mrs. Mansell, “ has been observed, for a week or two past, to leave his house very early in the morning:—as this was contrary to his usual custom, it alarmed his wife, who
began

began to entertain suspicions of no very agreeable nature.

“ At first, she proposed, that if he liked to walk out so early, his nephew, or one of the footmen, should attend. This appeared to offend Mr. Cleavland, and therefore encreased his wife’s anxiety; and being desirous of ascertaining the truth before she presumed to accuse him, she made a confidant of her nephew, who was then on a visit at her house, who agreed to follow his uncle at a distance. He traced him down several streets, quite into the northern suburbs of the town, till he entered a narrow alley, down several wretched steps, where the sun seemed never to have shed its rays. Two little children, half naked, and disguised with filth and deformity, who were sitting on the sill of a door, cried out, that the good gentleman was come; and as he entered the house, his nephew, still unseen, discovered through
the

the shattered remnants of a casement window, the deplorable wretchedness that his uncle had sought to relieve. In the corner of a room, where the falling plaster exposed the naked wall, lay a meagre, pale faced man, upon a ragged bed, which age and constant use had long ago denied the comforts of easy rest; his only covering was a rug, torn in several pieces, and a working coat, which, like its master, had seen all its better days: the rest of his moveables and effects had been all seized for his last week's rent, because the poor man had been confined for a month by the rheumatism; and his wife, being under the momentary expectation of being delivered of her seventh child, had been unable for that week to assist in the necessary labours for support of their family. She was giving him some oatmeal mixed in cold water, because they had not wherewithal to light a fire. But in the midst of this circle of poverty, a rough spaniel retained his

his fidelity, and watched by his master's side.

“ Oh, Sir,” cried the woman, you have been pleased to relieve our neighbours:—you are come to shew your pity upon us!—

“ The young man was now unable to restrain his affectionate respect, and rushing into the house, fell upon his uncle's neck, and kissed him:—‘ Suffer me, Sir, to participate in this excellent work—let me be made useful in your benevolence!’—

“ The poor people looked with mingled admiration and gratitude on them both.

“ How came you here?” said Cleaveland.—‘ No matter, Sir;—your business need not be interrupted by any account of that;—perhaps I may be a use-

ful messenger:—employ me quickly.’ He was accordingly dispatched to several shops in the neighbourhood for some necessary articles for the immediate sustenance of this poor family; and for which, as soon as it was found that they were for some charitable purpose, he was made to pay double price.

“ Mr. Cleavland then gave the man an order for admission in St. Bartholomew’s; and having directed his nephew to see him properly conducted and received there, he disposed of the children in the care of a good woman in the neighbourhood, at a weekly stipend, and sent the mother to the London Lying-in Hospital, where he knew she would be well taken care of. Mr. Cleavland has since caused the house to be repaired, against their return home, and furnished it with every comfortable accommodation of bedding and fuel.

“ Mrs.

“ Mrs. Cleavland had always loved her husband, and had accustomed herself to look up to him with the highest respect; but this new trial of his character rendered her almost guilty of idolatry!—How much good may be done by public institutions of charity; where, by the regular contribution of many small sums, thousands are relieved, whose distresses far exceed the reasonable bounds of one man’s liberality.

“ Poor Mrs. Cleavland!—her moments of suspicion were moments of the keenest agony; and the more so, because they proceeded from the most refined affection. We cannot always live in the sight of those we love; we are thrown into various companies, and drawn into various schemes: absences too often favour the malice of envious rumour; and even polite attentions only are sometimes made to bear an evil tale along with them.—Vain world!—how

we strive to create objects of distress; covet dissatisfactions, and look for spleen! We invite the corroding sting of envy, and instead of putting on the armour of light, we bare our bosoms to the stroke of malice and contempt."

While Mrs. Mansell was giving this new trait of the heart of the man, to whom I now more ardently longed to be related, Mr. Mansell was directing every thing for their journey. He now entered upon us, with the news of the whole being in readiness. A few words of friendship and good wishes passed between us, and they left me to tread by myself the ground they had prepared for me.

I remembered to have read, among the *Veillées du Chateau*, a curious delineation of the human heart, depicted in the allegory of a castle, dedicated to Truth; where, as soon as any one entered,

tered, they continued for three months; and in three days time they were insensibly obliged to speak the truth, though they had still the power of their actions, which they suited to what they thought they were expressing. Here I found a lover sighing at the feet of his mistress the most empassioned and scurrilous abuse against her person and accomplishments—vowing his hatred in the most pathetic tone of sympathy—declaring with the warmest animation his attachment to the charms of another;—husbands fawning on their wives, whom they were obliged to confess they hated;—women speaking their aversion, and acting their encouragements;—coquets laughing at their conquests, while they rent the air with the cries of their chagrin and despair.—Happy should I have been, if in such a palace of truth I could have learnt my real destiny: but truth needs but little discernment to be seen!—the language of truth has a charm, which, like a small flower,

rears

rears its modest head amidst the bold and splendid colours of the garden, which being first withered by the sun and the shower, the innocent plant rises to the fight, and ensures the continuance of our esteem.

But truth can never bear away the palm, until she can out-run interest. It may, perhaps, be always our best interest to be true; but truth does not always serve interest a good turn: interest more immediately guides our hopes, our ambition, our love. Some men are too much wrapped up in their businesses to have time for affections, or even to think there are delights in female society:—on the other hand, there are women who match these misers by their prudery or selfishness. But there are those who baffle all our vain speculations, and teach involuntarily to admire in them the charms of never failing truth! Why should I be restrained from recurring to her,
 whose

whose every feature was delicacy and sensation!—at whose pure shrine humility and gentle love would not disdain to bend!—her, who felt the soul of virtue, and marked the bliss of chaste refinement!—Oh, blessed days, when fortune suffered me to catch the vivid glories of her mind—to be idolatrous to female excellence—to bow the heart, and all the soul, to a constellation of those tender, yet ever animated symptoms, which displayed a mind concomitantly beautiful as her form—all fit for heaven!—But I forbear.—

Nor wilt thou—amiable partner of my soul—frown upon exulting gratitude, which vainly tries to give its best eulogy to a saint, who smiles in heaven upon the happiness which thou wast better constituted to administer to thy devoted Blenheim!

The

The time drew near when I had resolved to know the truth of Mrs. Mansell's friendship. I called at Grosvenor Square, and found Harriet alone, reading a letter. I would have withdrawn; but she familiarly called to me, saying, that a friend of mine was very well at Dover.—Mrs. Mansell, said I, is a general friend—but to us more particularly. She was surprised, and looked down upon her letter. I could see the gentle blush rise slowly upon her cheek, that encouraged me think she wished me to proceed. Suffer me, said I, my dearest Miss Cleavland, to say—that I could not remain insensible———I have long nourished a secret desire to entreat your forgiveness for my presumption;—and if I have presumed to tell your friend I loved you—let me, at least, hope to be forgiven!—

She remained silent—concealing her face under her veil. I could not proceed—

ceed—I drew my chair nearer to her’s—and taking up her hand, pressed it to my lips. She made no attempt to prevent me—and I held it some moments to my heart.—Let me hope then, said I—stifling the danger I was about to express—let me be allowed to hope, that an object, however unworthy, may—

At this instant Mrs. Cleavland entered the room; and, finding us thus engaged, would have returned:—but her daughter, not judging it so delicate to suffer her to withdraw, met her at the door, and desired she would stay with her.

Mrs. Cleavland was not a woman with whom it would have been right to use the same backwardness as to her daughter; and having no inspiration so to do, I made no hesitation to acquaint her very shortly with the state of my mind. “Well, my dear,” said she, “Mr. Blenfield, you
know,

know, we have all been long enough acquainted with, not to——”

Her daughter was confused—and earnestly begged she would say no more on the subject;—that she had not considered——

“ Considered !——Oh !——but as to that, you know your papa——!” Miss Cleavland left the room.——Mrs. C. gave me a significant look—and followed her.——

I was amazed !——I could not have conceived that I stood so highly in the mother’s favour as to receive all this encouragement.——Harriet certainly had not dismissed me.——I waited the denouement with the utmost impatience.

In about a quarter of an hour Mrs. Cleavland entered the room, and rung her bell for coffee, and was followed by
her

her daughter Harriet, leaning on her sister's arm; who, though she had seen me whenever I had been at the house, yet eagerly bent forward to look at me, as the avowed lover of her sister.

Mr. Cleavland soon arrived, and introduced with him a young man, whose manners and person were such, as to have given me a few anxious considerations, if I had not been able to discover that my hopes were not altogether disfavoured.

The conversation became general, but it was chiefly engaged in a story which then employed the attention of the polite world. I was mortified at this unseasonable interruption, and grew peevish within myself at the strange folly which pervades the gay world, in the great amusement they find in descanting upon the habits, the foibles, the vices of their neighbours; not so much to reprove, as
to

to copy them :—they seem to struggle at first with a natural compunction, at the thought of casting away their usual virtuous restraints, till, by repeating the trial, they overcome their hesitation—establish their polite and fashionable character—and become martyrs to a false esteem of things, in themselves repugnant, contrary to their disposition, and abhorrent to virtue.

The young gentleman told his story very fluently, and seemed to have practised it often enough to have acquired a tolerable ease in reciting the quick replies of each party.

“ As they were seated at breakfast,” said he, “ her ladyship rallied the marquis upon his apparent reverie, and hoped his thoughts were pleasant.

“ Truth,

“ Truth, said the marquis, smiling, shines resplendent in all the works of the creation.

“ Very suitable reflections for a morning orison, said the marchioness :—Shall I send for Milton to assist you ?

“ But, pray, said lady Betty, my lord’s maiden sister, who dearly loves a debate, are not you men works of the creation ?

“ Allowed, said the marquis, facing about——

“ And you think yourselves always true ! interrupted the marchioness, who could no longer conceal her pain.

“ I believe, said my lord, we have much more truth in us, than the women will ever give us credit for.

“ Then

“ Then you should try to deserve the character, returned she.

“ Upon my soul, lady marchioness, said he, I never spoke an untruth to any woman in my life.

“ Indeed, my lord!—returned she, purring her brow together.—

“ Lady Betty thought it high time to withdraw.

“ My lord, my lord—said the marchioness—there are some who will be satisfied with plausibility for truth ; but I cannot be so mistaken.

“ His lordship rose—walked to the window—complained of the weather—said his ride was spoilt—asked for lady Betty—almost trembled. His lady prepared him thus for the attack he had little expected.

“ I have

“ I have truths, my lord, to complain of, which are too resplendent to be concealed, and which you must bear to hear even *me* speak of.—I have an honor more tender than your lordship’s. You would preserve appearances;—but a woman’s wrongs surmount the language of deceit!——

“ He feigned an angry surprize.—I speak not, said she, from any hearsay evidence; and taking a letter from her pocket book, read it to him aloud: it was written in his own hand, signed with his own signature, and had been sealed with his lordship’s crest. It was addressed to a creature of his wicked purposes; and contained advice that her ladyship was on the following day to set off for Bath; that he had secured his own fellow to personate a nobleman who had once paid his addresses to his lordship’s niece, who was to force her into a post-chaise, from a house where she was visiting, about
 4 dusk,

dusk, and convey her to the house of the woman to whom he was writing; where, by the favor of a dark room and the hurry of the affair, his lordship, who designed to be there waiting her arrival, would receive his lovely ward, unopposed, into his arms.

“ The marquis turned pale—alternately he flushed with anger and indignation. He exclaimed that it was a forgery, and an insult.—

“ Revenge it then, said the marchioness. But as you chuse to disbelieve it, evidence shall be produced to attend your lordship’s conviction.—She rung the bell, and ordered Thompson to be sent up.

“ For heaven’s sake, said his lordship, do not call this fellow—I could not endure to see him.—Suffer me to entreat

entreat your patience—all shall be explained.

“ Let me rather, said lady have the satisfaction of preventing you from adding falsehood to infidelity.—This fellow, my lord, understands nothing of your fine sentiments—your resplendent truths—your fair sounding words ;——but his lord can condescend to become a partner with him in contrivances ; and the villain knows how to make a bargain for his trouble.—Oh, my lord, I will not put you to the pain of confessing, that, to sacrifice your amiable ward, you are ready to barter your own honour, and my peace !—You want to be the base boaster of her ruin, while you see her cast out by the world !—For this you are ready to tarnish your fame, reduce yourself below public or private chastisement, and be discarded by your sovereign, as a poisonous viper about his court.”

“ Spare me, spare me ! ”—cried his lordship—“ I can hear no more. ”—He dared not look towards her—he put out his hand, which for some minutes she refused to take.—She went on——

“ I cease, my lord, to punish you with invective—I would rather save you by forgiveness—[his lordship clasped his hands together]—I am inclined to believe that you already, nay, I almost conceive that your open disposition would have recoiled from the crime you planned, in the very moment of its perpetration :—but, I thank God for the chance that has laid open your levity, which must have involved us all in misery, which perhaps the forfeit of your life would have confirmed for ever.—Another time be better acquainted with the discretion of your companions. Your niece has no suspicions of her uncle’s regard, and she shall never hear from me a syllable of her danger. Alas ! it is sufficient for
me

me to sink under the weight of my own disappointment.

“ The marchioness sunk into a chair, and fainted. The women of the house were soon assembled to her assistance, and the marquis left her to their care.”

When the young gentleman finished his tale, he was very agreeably complimented on his manner of telling it, and for the information he had given so circumstantially.

I did not wish to reduce the laurels that he had won, by asking him for an authority for the private conversation that had been related, nor for the method which had been taken to procure a letter, the contents of which he was as well acquainted with, as if he had been present when it was read aloud : but, certain it was, he wished to render himself

K 2 agreeable,

agreeable, and to be noticed; and it is cruel to baulk young men in the progress.

Gaiety, wit, and fashion, were principles sufficient for him:—he never reflected deep enough to know the consequences of slander; and if he understood the etiquette of gesture, language, reply, and polite assurance—equivoque, and hypocrisy—were useful acquisitions he could never wish to discard. He was blessed with the surface of taste—could admire painting, when it represented beauty half concealed;—understood virtue, from the allegories and symbols of poetry;—and knew the excellence of the gentler sex, from their smiles—at his affectation!

Thus it is, that many contract habits of esteeming things which externally please them:—they suffer a phantom
to

catch their judgment, while it leads them through a labyrinth of unhallowed ground; where, at length, they sink overwhelmed in their own nothingness!

C H A P. XIV.

MAY it ever be the lot of humanity, and the lesson of youth, that the blessings of virtue are the smiles of heaven!—then we behold it in its native beauty, when it strives to conceal its merit.—Mr. Cleavland never more successfully won the heart of his wife and family, than by his generous visit to the poor. I could not have found a more favourable period for a discussion of my claim; but the interruption I had lately met with, left the whole progress of the affair afloat, and I was not permitted to enter further on the subject for some time. It is true I received attentions—I was happy—and was well received—but something kept me in a void, though I saw all I could wish to behold around me.—I felt, as it were,

were, unable to stand alone; but yet my mind, intent on one object, which was ever cloathed in smiles, saw every thing with an unfavourable eye, which intercepted the distant prospect that hung constantly in view.

May that star of virtue—that semblance of heavenly felicity—that inexplicable charm, that enlivens and exalts the heart,—ever shine radiant before the reader’s eye, and guide his young sensibility, and save him from indulgence and loose desire, and from perilous old age, by a well grounded, virtuous attachment!

In the suspense I endured, my reflections and conjectures rolled like a tempestuous sea, mountains on mountains high. Now I learnt how much I truly loved. I imagined that my Harriet was displeased, and sometimes thought she frowned;—my heart almost burst within

me;—I suffered it to take its full vent, that all my passion might discover itself anew;—I was agitated, and sleepless;—but——

I am unable to restrain my compassion for the patient reader—I hasten to put a period to his expectations, with the same ardour which I felt to relieve my own.——I renewed the subject that lay so near me—it was not forbidden;—I presumed to hazard an embrace—I was not repulsed;—I beheld the return of unrestrained affection;——I kissed the rising blush of modest purity; and in that moment I forgot mortality!

Preliminaries for our union were the next objects of my concern. I could look interest in the face, and dared answer its utmost claim. I found Mr. Cleavland open and generous—our mutual benefit was our mutual object—and we both took the part of guardians rather

ther than that of parties most interested for themselves.

Our affection seemed to encrease from the moment of its acknowledgment.— On further communication of our sentiments, we found that we had always thought alike;—we saw and felt the reflection of each other's hearts:—noble and eminent dignity of human nature!—Thus formed for social happiness, and framed to enjoy the most refined satisfactions!—Our parties were made together—our taste united in every landscape, where sequestered solitude beautified the scene—our conversations were relished with an unfailing delight, because we received a mutual pleasure in the unbiassed communication of sentiments that interested each other..

But why do I say *unbiassed*, when one view, and one unchangeable bond, biased all our thoughts:—when abstracted

from ourselves, every thing around us biaſſes our judgments;—things which are of no moment, of no report, gain a zeſt; nay, become a neceſſity, by their concomitances, which accompany them to our hearts.

Mr. Cleavland was a man of caution, and in all his own affairs made it his uſual practice to take time for the reſult of them, in order that he might not be injured by diſpatch. A conſiderable time elapſed before I could venture to recommend to his attention a day—the moſt ardently longed for—the moſt important day of my life.

When all the terms of the ſettlement were fully agreed upon, I finiſhed my propoſals with naming a day in the following week. Mr. Cleavland roſe from his chair in a ſort of wild ſurpriſe, and demanded to know if I had loſt my ſenſes, or thought that he had? I was
panic

panic struck!—When we are agreed, Sir, upon all the terms, and Miss Cleveland's fortune is disposed of as you desired, what needs there a delay?—

“I can best judge of that,” said he.
 “You are too young and hasty to judge—you are running mad for a wife.—

“For heaven's sake, Sir,—Pray, Sir,—interrupted he—leave me to know best what concerns my family.”

A fortnight hence, Sir—or perhaps next month.—Let me have some certainty to fix my mind upon.

“Next month!”—cried he—“Why you have scarcely opened your lips to the girl, and now you want to take her away from us.—In another year you will both be older—will have acquired more respect with the world—and will know

better whether you really love one another."

Never can we know that, said I, better than at this instant.——Indeed, Sir, you are too cruel!——How many things may occur in a long year—

"To prevent your union," said he;
"and, therefore, you may be happy never to have come together."

Here he took up his hat, and, pleading an immediate engagement, desired me to excuse his leaving me.

I knew not what to think of his temper; it had scarcely the appearance of caution, but of unfavourable procrastination. The rest of the family seemed ignorant of his design. I told Mrs. Cleavland my concern, at which she only smiled; and said she knew one in the family

mily who could use her influence with him, if it was necessary.

Harriet and her mother employed themselves in making purchases to adorn the intended bride, whose beauty was her best ornament. Happy, happy moments! when the gaunt barrier is removed from before the female heart, and she is suffered, without the imputation of indecorum, to confess she loves! —Far otherwise it is for us, when unkind suspense bears away the joy of being accepted.

Mr. Cleavland sent for me one day in some unusual haste. As soon as I arrived I found his countenance darkened by a frown of suspicion, which alarmed me.

“Sir,” said he, “you must excuse me, if, when I have listened to your attentions to my daughter, I request a few moments

moments of explanation to any affair in which your conduct is in a very serious degree interested. ——— “Do you know a Mrs. Darmer?” I do, Sir. “You are very intimate with her son.” I know that she has a son, but never was intimate with him. “Then, perhaps, you are intimate with her son’s wife only?”

Far, very far from it, said I, with some emotion.

“When I say intimacy, I mean friendship,” said he.

Indeed, Sir, I have neither.

“But,” said he, “if you have no friendship for them, you will, nevertheless, think it a great mark of friendship done to you, if any man would act the father to my daughter, and present her to you at the altar.”

Whatever

Whatever may have been related to you, said I, still remains unexplained.—Will you allow me to swear, that I will not conceal a tittle relative to Mr. Darmer's wedding; and, in the mean time, let me hope to be favoured with what report you have heard.

“About ten days ago,” said he, “we attended a party on the other side of the square; where, among other things, it was whispered that my daughter was very shortly to be married to Mr. Blenfield. A lady, with whom I had played a rubber at whist, asked me if I knew the young lady; to which I answered in the affirmative. She said she knew the young man very well—she wished the girl good luck—but he should not marry a daughter of her's if she had twenty to dispose of. Why so? said I. —Because I don't like his connections—and because I have great cause to speak of him as he deserves.—Here the lady fanned

fanned herself.——Are you a friend of the young lady, Sir? said she.——Yes, madam, a very near friend; I am her father, madam.——Is your daughter to be married soon, Sir?——Yes, madam, I believe so; very soon. The lady laboured with herself which to resolve upon—to conceal, or to disclose the burden upon her mind. You will excuse me, Sir,” added he, “if the affection of a parent induced me to urge her, as a duty, to clear up the suspicions she had raised.—

“ I had a son, whom I depended on as the only comfort left me. His disposition was gay and incautious—he was led into company by his associates, who plundered him of his virtue and honour; and this very man, on whom you are about to bestow that charming and innocent young woman, flattered him into an attachment for a bad woman, whom Mr. Blenfield had ruined; and, in order

der to skreen himself from the consequences, persuaded my son to marry her, and never quitted him till he assisted at their wedding. My son lived with her a few months, when they were obliged to separate by mutual consent, as my son then began to see how grossly he had been deceived.”

I could scarcely hear with decent patience this unkind representation of facts. As soon as he had concluded, I recalled to his remembrance that I had declared that all I should say on the subject would be sacred, as if bound by an oath. I then related to him the story of this wedding, with all its previous circumstances, in the manner which the reader has already been informed.—“ But if this be the case,” said he, “ from what source did your interview with the woman arise?—What would have followed, if she had not this pathetic tale to tell?—When you listened to her jargon of volubility,

bility, and accompanied her into her apartment, what view had you then?"

It may wear an unfavourable appearance, said I; but my resolution was firm enough to preserve my honour. I should have made her a small present for her conversation, and retired.

Cleavland shook his head, and smiled. —“ There never was a man, young or old,” said he, “ who could ever safely say, thus far in vice will I go, and no farther:—the steps are so gradual, that you perceive not your danger till you are overwhelmed.”

What further satisfaction, Sir, can I give you of my innocence? I am impatient to remove every disapprobation from your mind, even though I were to lose your daughter. Let me go and find Mr. Darmer, whose own account of the matter shall be my defence; nor will I
see

see your daughter again until I can see her among the smiles of all her family.

Here I hastily quitted him. If Darmer had left his wife, I should be at a loss to find him : if I called on Mrs. Darmer, she would not be more likely, or perhaps inclined, to tell me where to find him. I was unacquainted with his friends;—my only resource was to see his wife; and that, from my present situation, was too hazardous. My brother, who saw, with a brother's concern, the dilemma into which I was cast, undertook to go down to Darmer's wife, to learn, if possible, either from her or from the neighbourhood, something relative to his residence. I accompanied him part of the way; and when we stopt to change horses for the last stage, I took my station at the inn, where my brother agreed to stop on his return.

While

While I was musing by myself on the dangers to which we are exposed by the indiscretions of our youth ; and while I saw new difficulties rise before me, that excluded me for ever from my promised happiness, a chaise drove into the yard, and from my window I discovered Darmer and his wife.—Conceive my surprise.—I went out to meet them—they expressed their satisfaction in the most genteel and affectionate manner—they seemed happy with each other—and Darmer, pressing me by the hand, told me that I had been his best friend.

How different this from a separation by consent !—

As soon as we were quietly adjusted in a room to ourselves, I took the opportunity of Mrs. Darmer's absence to relate my situation of mind. It gave him some pain by the renewal of circumstances which he had strove to forget ;—" but,"
said

said he, " this, nor any other difficulty, shall ever prevent my rendering every service in my power to one, to whose conduct I have been so much obliged. I never have had but one disagreeable occurrence in consequence of my marriage. My wife is one of the best of women; but, soon after you left us, I wrote to my mother, who never condescended to return me any answer; and in a few days I perceived a young stripling leisurely wandering about the house, and being quite a stranger to every body, I chose to ask, rather roughly, what he was doing, and who he was. The young gentleman grew insolent; and taking him by the arm I dragged him to the house, to enquire what were his designs upon my premises.

He was much frightened, and said he meant no harm; that he was desired to come down, to see whether we lived there, and that his name was Anderton.

" And

“ And who sent you?” said I.—One Mrs. Darmer, of Spring Gardens, answered the lad.—Well, and she sent some letter or message?—No, Sir; only that, to know who lived here.

“ Now you must know,” said Darmer, “ though my mother and I have never been on very good terms since my father’s death, yet I thought she might, perhaps, have sent us a present, and I was very much inclined to suspect the young man had stolen it, and did not know how to get off with his booty, without being able to tell something of the house and neighbourhood; but he told his name, and appeared to be more alarmed for a threshing than any thing else, and therefore I gave him some ale, and let him go.”

I now began to trace the channel of Mrs. Darmer’s information; and well recollected the coolness with which I had

treated the match she so warmly espoused between young Anderton and Miss Ann Barclay ; and prepared myself to expect worse contrivances from a quarter so skillfully versed in domestic politics.

My brother arrived in the evening, to whom I introduced the party in question ; and on the following morning we set off to London together.

What a dance are these women, said I, capable of leading us weak men !— They know their influence, and they watch its power ; and when they have secured us fast, they hand us over to some keener and less interested judge, who examines all our little foibles, our fallies, our indiscretions, and marks them with a censor's eye. How cautious ought a young man to be, who ever dreams of bending to the shrine of true affection !—that shrine, where true virtue alone is fit to bend, and where the heart

heart must wear a robe of purity, never to be faded !

“ It is the consciousness of our failing here,” said my brother, “ that, like a mist, obscures us from ourselves while we are in the company of women ;—it is this which changes our behaviour, and alters our expression ;—the language of irregular gallantry, and vain protestation, is lost—we see a purity that we adore, and sink in our own conviction—how little we dare aspire to it !

CHAP. XV.

AS soon as we arrived in London I waited on Mr. Cleavland, and desired to introduce Mr. Darmer, whom he received with cool politeness. Mr. Darmer not only confirmed the history I had related, but also explained the cause of his absence from his mother, ever since the selfish step she had taken in regard to his fortune.

Mr. Cleavland appeared to be satisfied, but he did not express that he was so. He acknowledged his obligation to Mr. Darmer, but he shewed no cordiality to me.—I was pained, and disappointed.—Darmer politely withdrew.

May I hope, Sir, to have removed your suspicions?—"Not quite," replied he:—"the mother and the son so flatly contradict one another, that I doubt whether either of them is to be believed."

I was then glowing in the energies of seven and twenty—when the heart is warm, the passions redundant, and love bursts out in the most urgent ebullitions:—my temper was on the rack;—had not Mr. Cleavland preserved his temper better, we must have rushed into a quarrel.

We separated. I had no other road to take, but to satisfy myself of the suspicion I now entertained, that Mrs. Darmer had levelled the venom of her malignant disposition against me. In the mean time my heart burned with anxiety at the idea that Miss Cleavland would have good cause to put some very unfavourable constructions on my absence,

at

at a time when it was most probable, had I really loved her, that I should have hazarded the *ennui* of the rest of the family, by giving them too much of my company. I pictured to myself the surprise she might express to her mother, and the mother's enquiries of Mr. Cleaveland, to discover the cause of so unusual and blameable a neglect. I felt as much in the prospect of an unkind issue of the affair, as if I had already received my dismissal; and I imagined the prize I aspired to as retreating daily from my view, till I almost lost the hope of ever beholding its lustre again!

In this frame of mind, it cannot be supposed that I waited on Mrs. Darmer with any disposition for general conversation, or for parley. On my arrival at Spring Gardens, I found her house shut up, and that Mrs. Darmer was gone to Bath.

I had no other resource than to go to Miss Barclay's for the information I required. When I came within view of the house, I stopt to consider in what manner I could most successfully procure it. I knew Anderton to be a weak, ignorant youth; and by civility to him it was possible that any plot, to which Mrs. Darmer was fully competent, might be discovered. I found them together at breakfast. My appearance seemed to produce a general alarm; but after every body were with some difficulty adjusted, and this awkward youth had spilt his tea and thrown down the milk-pot, I very unfortunately compleated his trouble, by asking if I might give him joy.

The poor lad blushed; and, after some hesitation, replied, he believed not.

"I thought we might have asked you the same question," said Sally Barclay, "but I find it's otherwise."

Otherwise

Otherwise!—said I, with surprise.—
Explain yourself.

“ Nay, we only heard that your affair was gone off, on account of something about the settlement.”

Still more mysterious! said I. Where did you learn your information?

“ Oh, when we were last in town,” said she.

Of whom?—

“ Oh, a friend of our’s.”—

Who knew as much of the matter as yourself, said I.—Pray, when did you see Mrs. Darmer?—

“ She called here yesterday, in her way to Bath.”

We sat for some time silent; and at length taking Anderton by the hand, I very cordially wished him happy:—and as I was moving towards the door, Sally Barclay desired to speak with me in the other room.

She told me that Mrs. Darmer had planned the affair between her and Anderton, with a view to see her well married, and that her friendship was very material to their welfare; but that, as she could never persuade his friends to accede to so early a wedding, she had proposed, that if they married at the end of a year, she would herself give them a small legacy, which she had already inserted in her will; that the time was nearly expired; that they never could gain either the consent or disapprobation of his friends; and that Mrs. Darmer had called upon them the preceding day, without ever noticing her former promise; and that young Anderton had very

very trifling expectations from his father, who had been taken ill a few days ago, with little hopes of recovery.

I told her, if she loved young Anderson, she must be content with delay, until his father's death or recovery; and that she must write to Mrs. Darmer to remind her of her kindness. My cousin did not relish this advice—she looked down, and was silent for some time.

Shall I say any thing to Mrs. Darmer, said I, to remind her of your situation?—

She hesitated.—I desired her to speak freely;—when she told me, she feared any recommendation from me would not be so well received as I might wish; that Mrs. Darmer had never conceived any favourable regard to my brother, and therefore, as she knew we were inseparable, she was not better af-

fect towards me.--At this moment young Anderton interrupted us, whom I suspected, from his countenance, had been listening at the door; which, not being quite put to, sprung open, and let him forward into the room:—I caught him by the hand, and told him, that I had learnt that it was out of my power to serve him with Mrs. Darmer.

“ That is because she thinks that you would not do any thing for us, when the letter was sent to my father; and because she suspects you sent my father word of our affair before hand; and if you did, I am sure you had no right to do so.”

I protested that I never had written, or spoken to any of his family but himself—that her suspicions were false.—

“ And then she said,” continued he, “ that she should serve you in the same manner, for she had said enough to Mr. Cleavland.”

Cleavland."——About what—whom?
said I.——

"About a young Miss that you was
to have married, and did not——and
something about her son."——

Who was that lady? said I.—"A
Miss Harley," said he, hesitatingly.—
What of her?—interrupted I.

"Why, she was to have been married
to you—and you saw Miss Cleavland,
whom, she said, you liked better, and
so you left her."——Heavens!—cried I,
stamping on the ground—how far will
envy and revenge pursue me?——Sir,
the lady you speak of is now married to
a worthy man, or at least will shortly be
so:—I have known the lady, but I never
—my words dropped upon my lips—I
dared not affirm that she had never inte-
rested me.——This must be cleared up,

said I, and Mrs. Darmer shall answer for her baseness!

“For heaven’s sake, Sir,” said Anderton, “do not say I told you this—for then we should lose all our expectations of her friendship.”—Upon that, said I, let me advise you to place no dependance:—a woman, whose malevolence carries her into low plots, dictated by malice, and supported only by falsehood, is not capable of friendship.—

I was obliged to leave them abruptly.—I returned home—my situation was deplorable!—but those who saw deeper than my affections would suffer me to penetrate, encouraged me with the prospect of seeing truth rise, at last, superior to falsehood.

Three weeks had elapsed since I had seen Harriet. I had once waited on Mr. Cleavland, in his study, where I was received

ceived too coolly to hazard another interview: but I was resolved not to despair, or shrink from enquiry. I knew myself to be blameless in this part of my conduct, and I doubted not that, if I were found wanting in this trial of my love, I should be disowned by God as a traitor.

My next measure, therefore, was to learn the real situation of the Harley family. I trembled while I pursued an uncertain issue; fearing that I might have already lost the object so dear to me—rendered dearer by opposition—and more distant from possession, by prejudices and surmises, as ill founded as ungenerous. I knew that a quick transfer of affection was held, among women of sentiment, to be a crime without a pardon. Miss Cleavland might, perhaps, charge me with this imputation; and I had no friend to plead for me.

L 6

I found.

I found Miss Harley alone; and, by taking her left hand as she rose to receive me, I discovered that she had not yet knelt at the shrine of Hymen.—“ Since I saw you,” said she, in her usually communicative manner, “ I have been almost given away to the man you saw here one evening, in the last summer; but there were reasons, which upon a clearer understanding, rendered it utterly impossible:—and now, I do not know what fate is reserved for me—I expect to die an old maid.”——Heaven forbid, said I.——Why should you, of all women, despair?

“ Despair!” she repeated.—“ Still the same unpolished creature you ever was.——Despair, indeed!—I might find cause to be cruel—but to despair belongs not to me.”

Rather, I suppose, you mean to the poor man you have made wretched.

“ Oh,

“ Oh, a simpleton,” returned she, “ he has been loitering about the neighbourhood——and sighs——and tells his friends that I have been influenced against him.——He does not know that my own choice is alone my influence.”

But, said I, you must compassionate the loss of all his hopes !

“ That is nothing more,” returned she, “ than this ;—that when a man declares himself to a woman, she must absolutely accept him, to save him from the mortification of being questioned by his companions. How are we to know a man till we have accepted his intercourse in our family ? And then he is to complain if we don’t marry him, after what he is pleased to call encouragement. Are we to hold ourselves always ready to marry a man as soon as he asks us ?”——

Surely

Surely not, said I. But if you reject him, he must be allowed to have his feelings.

“Not half so much as he would pretend to have. Besides, a dying swain is a laughable, contemptible character:—and if every man was to be a Werter, where would the world be at this moment?”—

In a very miserable condition, indeed, said I;—but that is an extraordinary state of desperation.

“True,” returned she; “the men know better things:—variety is charming;—they have no real objection to be released from their obligations.”

I felt the reply, and dared not either look in her face, or hazard a continuance of the subject.

Miss Harley did not seem to have acquired much sweetness of temper by the *denouement*; and added one to the number of those many instances, wherein, while men actually devote themselves to a pusillanimous servitude on a woman, who is doubtful of the person she will choose for the protector of her life;—she is varying from scene to scene—listening to every zephyr of vain protestation—forming undigested schemes of fortune and happiness, and lavishing indiscriminate glances on all the flutterers around her:—thus, when a favourable opportunity offers, she is fearful of embracing it, lest she should afterwards see some other object who may possess more accomplishments, or some additional requisite, to form the character she imagines herself to be in search of.

Having found, by the above conversation, that Miss Harley had herself rejected the proposals last made to her, the purpose

purpose of my visit was answered; and as I resolved to be more cautious in my intercourse in future, I took my leave, with a firm resolution of putting a speedy end to my anxiety.

CHAP. XVI.

AS I came into Grosvenor Square, Mr. Cleavland's carriage drove to the door. As I could not doubt but that the cause of my absence had been explained by Mr. Cleavland, I feared that, from the unkind appearances which had arisen against me, my reception could not be favourable; and imagining that I could read in the countenance of Harriet the language of reproof, I felt a sort of consciousness *of guilt*, as if I had really been guilty:—her hand trembled as much as mine when I handed her from the carriage; her mother in silence accepted my arm. I hesitated for a moment whether to follow them, or take my leave. Mrs. Cleavland looked as if she would neither invite, nor be offended

at

at my presence. When we were seated in the dressing room, I directed myself chiefly to Mrs. Cleavland, that I might avoid the danger of her daughter's retiring. I said, that I supposed she had not been suffered to remain a stranger of the embarrassment into which the malevolence of an enemy had thrown me;—that under so mortifying a situation, while I suffered the least suspicion from Mr. Cleavland, it would have been impossible for me to have enjoyed the satisfaction of their society;—that I had at length attained the power of clearing up every part of my conduct;—and that it was with this view that I had now ventured to intrude again upon my best friends, and again to entreat them.

“ I believe,” interrupted Mrs. Cleavland, “ that Mr. Cleavland is now in his study.”

I rose

I rose to withdraw. As I passed to the door, I perceived Harriet's face pale, and full of emotion. Had she been alone, I could have pleaded for myself. I touched her hand, which she only leisurely withdrew:—it was a preface of my success.

I found Mr. Cleavland ready to enter fully into my justification. He said, he had heard sufficient both of myself and of Mrs. Darmer, to clear away any suspicions he might have entertained;—that Mrs. Darmer had spoken of me with an acrimony unparalleled;—and that she had further given him to understand, that I was at that time engaged in an attachment to a young lady, which my honour called upon me to fulfil.

I assured him of my freedom; and explained to him the friendship which I had always entertained for Mr. Harley and his family; and that Miss Harley
was

was, but a very short time since, going to be married to a gentleman, whom, for some reasons it was not necessary for her to declare, she had very lately dismissed. Mr. Cleavland was the more readily satisfied with this explanation, as he had already received intelligence from another quarter, which, by its agreement with what I had said, bore testimony to its truth; and he declared, that he had been made extremely anxious, by the prospect he had imagined of being obliged to put a negative upon my wishes;—that he had, by the means of a friend, acquainted himself with Mrs. Darmer's character, and likewise with that line of connection which he hoped to see me ready to avoid;—he said, that he had now amply informed himself of all he wished to know relative to my character and family; and desired me to present his respects to my father, to whom, he said, he should expect that I would

would not delay to communicate to him his satisfaction.

Here then I felt myself triumphant over all my difficulties—here I exulted in the full glory of animating hope—and after all the changes and chances of dubious fortune, I found myself in the midst of success,—resolved to be content.

I want words to describe my sensations. I rose from my seat—first clasped his hand—and then folded him in my arms.—He was touched by my emotions—I could feel his heart beat against mine—he felt all that a fond parent could feel—perhaps more than I felt myself. I was hastening to the door, when, not knowing that I had previously seen his wife and daughter, he said it would be necessary for him to introduce me to them again.

We

We entered the room together; when, taking me by the hand, he led me to his wife, and warmly expressed the pleasure he received at the satisfactory explanations which had taken place.

The good woman looked at me with a full heart—and putting out her hand towards me, she could only make an effort to speak. I bowed respectfully upon her hand; and in that instant Harriet entered the room—I rushed towards her with a violence, perhaps even the circumstances of the moment would not, among very refined people, have excused. For my part, it was impossible to restrain the affecting joy, to find myself once more restored to all my fondest hopes could desire. I was lost for a moment;—on recovering myself—My dearest Harriet will permit me, on some future occasion, to explain the difficulties which, for a time, have intercepted my ardent hopes: for the present, she will

will suffer her father's kindness to perform the part of my justification.

Mr. Cleavland put our hands together—he embraced his daughter with paternal tenderness—she folded her arm in mine, and I led her to a chair.—I need not express, said I, the satisfaction I feel in being enabled again to renew my hopes of your favourable opinion, of which I had almost despaired:—this additional mark of your generosity, in receiving again the sincerest devotion of my heart, will impress me with an obligation I shall never forget.

Harriet could not reply.—One idea, one hope, one principle, and one emotion, wholly occupied me; I had, therefore, no power to continue a conversation, on which we were both agreed, and which could at that time have been only a forced repetition of the most affectionate professions. We sat silent for
some

some time,—her hand insensibly clasped in mine.

Reader, if ever thy affairs have brought thee to this crisis, thou hast felt a calm, but awful serenity creep upon thy mind, glow in thy heart, bringing with it the charm of security in the object of thy affection, and dictating to thy soul the noblest of the energies—the resolution to deserve the prize thou hast obtained.—This is that native generosity of the human breast, that pervades in still silence all the frame of man—fills him with virtues scarcely known—and dignifies his nature by the glory of its fair reward! This is that silence which reigns only where true love attends, and which prepares the happiness of domestic life, which virtuous affection calls her own.

It is needless to add, that after a few days had elapsed, and both families had united in the most cordial good wishes
for

for our happiness, an early day was agreed upon, and I received the hand and the heart of Harriet, in the midst of a circle of amiable friends, ardent in their approbation, and zealous in their love.

The most free and delightful intercourse has now subsisted among us for some years:—the light of love has not burnt out, and seems far distant from its end. Two healthy boys, and one elegant, sparkling girl, with blue eyes, and fair hair, have testified our zeal for posterity; and the blessings of matrimony have fallen to our lot, through the happy medium of domestic peace.

The Mansells are still abroad. Mrs. Harley died about a year since, and her daughter, still urgent in the pursuit of volatile gaiety and various attentions, has now compleated the prospect of celibacy

for life.—I have lately heard that Mrs. Garnel is about to marry again; and that my sister has this morning awakened anew the tenderness and paternal pride of my worthy brother's heart, by the acceptable present of a beautiful girl, to inherit its mother's virtues.

Miss Barclay has at length had the courage to dismiss Anderton from her apron string, finding that there was no chance of ever rendering him useful to her; and Mrs. Darmer, having been laid up for a long time with the gout, died lately of a mortification which settled on one of her legs, and which a gross and violent habit combined to render rapid and malignant:—she died at Bath, universally known for her slander, and universally execrated.

And with regard to myself—I have found the door that leads to endless happiness!

ness! Let me urge the reader on to this sacred eminence—and let me draw from the recesses of his heart, the generosity of his nature, which *cannot live for itself alone!*

CONCLUSION.

NOTwithstanding the difficulties which usually alarm and assail people of moderate fortune, at their first most important engagement in life ; yet these are counterbalanced by the delight of mutual affection : for this, let a man call up his gratitude, and acknowledge the pleasing source of his activity, which animates his pursuits, cheers his labours, and warms his virtuous assiduity :—let him reflect, while he endures inconveniences, that they are participated by one who listens to his cares ;—let him consider, that to guard against small, and repeated vexations or dissatisfactions, is the security of mutual happiness ;—that if dissensions arise, the storm is averted by doubling his attention ;—that by differences

ences of opinion, strenuously maintained, argument and feud insensibly spring up together; and that, by striving to be the chief in power, all confidence is lost: human nature cannot endure submissions in private life. Let affairs take their natural course; and let each party attend to the respective offices of their domestic economy.

Sympathy in moments of tenderness—ready acquiescence in small requests—a desire to be pleased—and a principle of delicacy, never to be infringed in conduct or in converse—are essential and successful means of preserving entire that pure and grateful admiration, which at first produced a preference.

When it pleases indulgent heaven to bless your fond embraces with pledges of your love, it is by no means difficult to prevent their becoming sources of contention:—resolve together upon their

plan of life—be cautious in suiting their education to their condition, and watch the progress of their ideas, lest they be corrupted by indiscriminate companions from the road of early simplicity, and keep up your consequence in their eyes, by never suffering them to be witnesses to your own differences with each other.

We learn all by imitation. Those we are taught to regard, influence our most trifling and thoughtless habits; and thus our children are almost always the disclosers of their parents tempers and manners.

But let me review myself.—What I have said, has been the dictate of sincerity:—I trust that my motives have not appeared weak, or my conduct altogether unmanly. I confess, that I have cultivated sensibility; and my mind's best and most pleasing enjoyment has been in the admiration of tenderness and simpli-

simplicity. He that bears a heart inimical to these, will read me with contempt; but he must not exult in a consequent superiority, for I am free to tell him, that our contempt is mutual.

I have coveted the delights of the female circle; I have sought out their views, their schemes, and their joys; I have nourished their gratifications, communicated in their pleasures, and soothed their sorrows: and, after all, though I have trembled at my own dangers, yet the honour of virtuous attachments, and female intercourse, is the source of pure delight, and the preservation of virtue.

When I set forward in the world, I resolved that my attentions should be general; but when I beheld merit smiling upon me—when I could embrace a heart congenial with my own, which could catch the same energies, admire the same theme, enjoy the same bliss, and taste

the same enthusiasm—Oh, where is the human soul, that, even devoid of sensibility, would not glory to fix his choice!—where is the heart that could suppress the impulse of grasping the same flame, and feeding on the same repast!

Ten thousand emotions I have left unsaid. I seem like the hungry gleaner, who, doubting of his labour, returns to view the stubble o'er and o'er again, and at length departs unsatisfied. Nevertheless, if I have contributed to the reader's satisfaction, I may hope to have secured his esteem: if he has felt with me a few tenderneesses of heart, I trust he will not think himself the worse; and I must entreat, that he will impute many of the desultory movements of my story to the errors and uncertainties which shade all human events.

Thus then, kind reader, I trust myself to thy candour. Thou hast traced
me

me to the most important and interesting period of my life ; when I am quietly seated in the arms of an affectionate family, remote from the hurry of the world, on whose continual uproar I reflect with amazement.—I thank thee for thy patience ; and heartily pray, that it may be thy lot to be as fortunate as myself in the end of thy career :—and may the All-wise disposer of all events illuminate our weak understandings, by the light of his essential goodness, and at length unite us to a state of happiness never to be dissolved—when we shall laugh with contempt at the trifles of human importance !

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